

السنة الأولى

Monday January 31st
Law, page 14
Back, page 15
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Tuesday January 30 1996

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Czech Republic KC45	Lebanon L 1,500	Switzerland S 1.50
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The Guardian

INTERNATIONAL

Printed in London, Manchester, Frankfurt and Roubaix

NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR
46,482

Mark Slouka on the limits of cyberspace

Education

Whatever happened to Thatcher's lieutenant?

Life, but not as we know it



Can Labour improve inner city schools?

Forever Young



Guardian 2 with European weather

G2 pages 10/11

G2 pages 4/5

PM throws down gauntlet

Blair attacked on crime 'hypocrisy'

Michael White
Political Editor

JOHN Major last night took the gloves off in his fight back against Tony Blair and accused the Labour Party of repeatedly undermining the Government's efforts to deter, capture and punish criminals who "bend our laws and spurn our moral code".

Hoping to capitalise on last week's Conservative charges of hypocrisy over Harriet Harman's choice of school for her son, Mr Major insisted that the Opposition's response was the same on law and order, a topic which min-

isters intend to make a central theme of their re-election campaign.

"No matter what they [Labour] say about crime, they persistently do something else. Day by day, Labour show themselves in their real colours. And the colour they reveal is not soft focus blue, it is the colour of envy and hypocrisy," said Mr Major.

"I don't believe in a harsh society, but I do believe in a self-disciplined society," he explained. Tory officials made it plain later that Mr Major hopes to wrong-foot Mr Blair by challenging him to match his tough rhetoric and help to get the forthcoming Criminal Justice Bill through Parliament on a fast-track.

As the Labour leader was making his own plea for a fresh commitment to inner-city renewal and community values last night, the shadow chancellor, Gordon Brown, led a furious counter-attack against what he called the smears, dirty tricks and spurious accusations which will come from "the Tory lie machine" as election day approaches.

Mr Major must have known he would be accused of "diminishing his office" if he appeared to endorse Michael Heseltine's jibe that Labour is "the villain's friend."

Though his language was milder, the Prime Minister used a Conservative Political Centre (CPC) lecture in London to associate himself with it and with Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, in his clash with senior judges over tackling the crime wave.

In a taunt directed at Mr Blair's best known slogan, he suggested that Labour is still too concerned with the rights of criminals rather than vic-

Angry words over criminal records

"It's true. The fact is they have consistently opposed the changes we have made. There are villains behind bars today who would be walking free if Labour had their way."

Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, speaking yesterday.

"Since 1979, burglary has increased by 160 per cent, theft from vehicles by nearly 200 per cent and violent crime by 400 per cent. That's the real Tory record."

John Prescott, Labour deputy leader, to Michael Heseltine in the Commons yesterday.

"It debases public debate in this country to say that Labour are supporting the criminals. I will not engage in that type of politics. I do not intend to get into the gutter with Mr Major and his Cabinet."

Tony Blair, campaigning in Hemsworth yesterday.

"When it came to the last Criminal Justice Act... what did Labour do? They abstained. Day by day, Labour show themselves in their real colours. And the colour they reveal is not soft focus blue. It's the colour of envy and hypocrisy."

John Major last night.

of honesty or common sense is to attack with vigour the conditions in which crime breeds and at the same time to insist that serious crimes require serious punishment," he said.

Mr Major's speech lacked social context other than the need to pass on moral values and to stop children going down the "slippery slope" which starts with truancy.

"For every crime there's a victim. For that victim, that crime isn't a dry statistic. It's something personal," he said.

"For every crime, there's a criminal. Not a product of society, but an individual who has made a conscious decision to harm someone for personal gain. And every crime is wrong."

Last night, Jack Straw, shadow home secretary, said that after 17 years Mr Major's remarks amounted to "a monumental admission of failure," notable only for their complacency.

"The only strategy with an



From left: Margi West, Philomena Kelly, Christine Winter and Maria Martinez, four of the 33-strong Camden syndicate celebrate their win yesterday. PHOTOGRAPH: FRANK MARTIN

We'll keep good work rolling over, say £10m winners

Owen Bowcott

LEADING members of a syndicate of 33 council workers who scooped £10 million on the National Lottery yesterday pledged to stay at their posts, helping the homeless find accommodation in north London.

For the exhilarated winners, who each receive a £304,794 share of the roll-over jackpot, it was almost a normal Monday, interviewing applicants who

had come in off the streets near King's Cross and had nowhere to go.

But the mood at Camden's homeless persons' unit was one of jubilation reinforced by a determination to continue their work. One of the syndicate did not realise he had won until he arrived at the office yesterday.

Asked whether anyone had taken the day off to celebrate, assessment officer Margie West told a hastily convened Camelot press conference: "To work in a

What Camden could do with a £10m windfall

For £10 million, Camden council could:

- Run three secondary schools for a year.
- Complete two-thirds of the repair programme on the 60 primary, secondary and special schools in the borough.
- Build 40 new nursery classes and provide 1,000 places for the under fives.
- Repair and decorate 2,500 council homes.
- Accommodate 1,650 families for a year in emergency bed and breakfast hostels.

homeless section you have to be committed. You can't just walk away from people who need you."

Christine Winter, manager of the unit which has

been commended in the Charter Mark awards, added: "It's highly stressful work, but no one is talking of leaving."

Not all the 40-strong unit

Unemployment linked to bad spelling as survey shows two out of three adults fail simple tests

Donald MacLeod
Education Correspondent

TWO-THIRDS of adults, including more than half of graduates, cannot spell everyday words like "accommodation", according to a survey published by the Basic Skills Agency yesterday.

One in three could not spell

words like "receive", "sincerely" or "apologise", while more than half had trouble with "necessary" and "immediately".

Alan Wells, director of the agency, said standards of spelling, punctuation and ability to fill in forms were worse than he had feared.

The survey of 1,000 adults published yesterday found a

link between bad spelling and unemployment.

Coincidentally, employers yesterday called for basic literacy skills to be made a priority in schools and secondary pupils coached in letter writing and interview skills.

A report from Industry in Education said 28 billion words were saved if young people's "employability" was developed. Less concentration on the national curriculum and more on personal qualities was needed.

Mr Wells said many employed applicants automatically rejected application forms containing spelling errors or poor punctuation.

"There is a case for stress-

ing spelling and basic maths purely to get young people over the hurdle of getting into the job market. We don't do people any favours by being dishonest and telling people those skills do not matter."

"It's not too much to expect that everyone should have a good grasp of spelling and punctuation," he said.

Schools had "taken their eye off the ball" for a time, although teachers were reintroducing spelling tests.

The 16 to 24 age group educated during the Thatcher years were consistently worse than their elders. The agency concluded that its estimate that one in six adults had literacy problems was too low.

Punctuation was even shakier. Even with what Mr Wells described as a "liberal" marking system, three out of four failed to fill in a simple passage requiring full stops, capital letters, and the occasional apostrophe. The result in many cases was a "random scattering of commas", he mentioned the agency's report.

When asked to fill in a job application form, one in four adults showed poor or very poor skills and were unable to provide detailed information without making significant grammatical or spelling mistakes. The worst could just manage a name and address.

Column inches, G2, page 4

Word	Percentage spelling these words incorrectly
Allowance	15
Sincerely	33
Receive	37
Apologise	40
Unfortunately	40
Necessary	43
Accommodation	43
Immediately	45
Occasionally	55
Accommodation	68

Source: The Basic Skills Agency

Electric supply 'at the limit'

Chris Barrie

BITAIN'S electricity system came close to collapse yesterday for the third time in six months after several power stations were closed by gas shortages and demand for energy neared record levels.

As recommitments broke out within the electricity and gas industries over who was to blame and whether such a fiasco had been inevitable, officials at the National Grid yesterday confirmed that the system had faced "exceptional circumstances" with the abrupt closure of two power stations and the unavailability of gas-fired plant as gas shortages.

Yesterday the Grid rescheduled its remaining stations to avoid blacking out the 33 mil-

lion electricity consumers in Britain.

It said that peak demand of 48,400 megawatts in the early evening was just short of the all-time record set last Thursday but had been met with a normal margin of security "and some to spare".

But the events left widespread concern that the Grid could become incapable of meeting peak demands for power in winter months due to closure of old coal-fired plant and its replacement with new gas-fired plant. This unease was reinforced by the Grid's apparent lack of preparation for coping with panic about the prospect of power cuts.

Describing the change to gas as "complete folly", Tony Cooper, general secretary of the Engineers and Managers turn to page 3, column 6

"How to Look Sexy, Make Friends and Manage Your Boss"

People Watching
by **Vernon Coleman**

"The ubiquitous media doc has done it yet again: this time turning his talents for producing sparkling gems of information in rapid-fire sequence to the field of body language and private habits. As always, he makes his subject both personally relevant and of practical use. Here's how to judge people by the Christmas cards they send, the bags they carry or the cars they drive, plus how to manipulate your doctor, appear sexy or make a rival uneasy and a host of other tips too. Once you start to browse you would have to be a hermit not to find it utterly unputdownable" (The Good Book Guide)

- Contents include:**
- 3 ways to tell when someone is lying
 - 7 signs that someone is interested in you sexually
 - 8 giveaway signs of nervousness
 - 6 ways to tell if someone is bored
 - 20 ways to look sexy
 - 12 ways to look like a winner
 - 10 ways to be a successful interviewee
 - 11 ways to negotiate successfully
 - 10 ways to avoid being mugged
 - 8 ways to manage your boss
 - 16 ways to deal with aggressive people
 - 22 ways to get power over people
 - 4 ways to make people like you
 - and much much more!

To order your copy send a cheque or postal order for £9.95 (payable to Publishing House) to: People Watching Sales Office GU28, Publishing House, Trinity Place, Barnstaple, Devon EX32 9HJ. Post and packing is FREE. Your book will be despatched within 28 days. MONEY BACK GUARANTEE - simply return within 28 days of receipt for a full refund if not delighted.

G2

News 7
Law 7
Arts 6/8
Education 10/11
Weather 12/13

Cartoons 15
Radio 16
Television 16
Weather 16

9 770261 307323

Sketch

Money-spinning words doctored



Simon Hoggart

READERS may not know this, but Mr Peter Mandelson — MP for Hartlepool and principal confidant of Tony Blair — has written a book about the future of the Labour Party.

This is probably more than the Guardian can afford. In fact it's more than we could pay for the authenticated memoirs of God.

Fortunately, following negotiations, the asking price for the Mandelson book has fallen sharply and will no doubt settle somewhere between the half-million and my own suggestion, 37p.

In the meantime we were hugely privileged in the Commons to hear the author make a rare on-the-record intervention. It was brief, but at the regular fee of £100 per word, worth £8,400.

Of course, such a short question could only give us a mere soupçon of the delights to come in the book.

Here is what he said: "Following your descent into the campaign gutter yesterday... will you give an undertaking that these abuses will not be allowed to continue, as the Tories' lies and sneers against Labour mount as the election continues, as inevitably they will?"

Some ignorant people might think those words were just another example of ungrammatical, semi-literate, party political abuse. But then there

are some people who, offered a glass of Ch. Margaux '64, would ask for a nice cup of tea instead.

Mr Heseltine, to whom the superbly hand-crafted words were addressed, is clearly one such. He replied boorishly: "I know Mr Blair talks only to you, but I didn't realise he would send you here to eclipse his own party leader!"

"And nobody has brought more professional skill to the debasement of British public life than you!"

Mr Mandelson smiled, silently. We yearned to hear his devastating reply, but none of us could afford it.

This all came in the middle of the worst-tempered Deputy Prime Minister's Question Time ever. Tory MPs had all been instructed by the whips to ask the same questions in different words.

Tim Yeo, a man desperate to re-ignite himself after his classic love-child scandal, accused Labour of shedding "crocodile tears for the victims of crime merely to conceal their real sympathy, which is for the criminals!"

Labour MPs (they cannot get quite as angry with Hezza as they wish; he is too much of a well-loved music hall turn) demanded to know why crime had doubled in the period of Tory government.

The answer, according to Mr Heseltine and his colleagues, is because Labour MPs voted against various crime prevention measures which became law, but failed to work only because the Labour Party did not vote for them at the time.

This requires sophisticated criminological analysis: "I would not normally wish to mug this old lady for the contents of her handbag, but the Opposition's refusal to support statutory appeals against lenient sentences sends a clear message to me and my sort that I'll get away with it. So give it 'ere or I'll kick your head in."

Blaming crime on 17 years of Labour misrule may be a pretty desperate tactic, but it's all the Tories have got. Except, of course, for Harriet Harman.

What is so remarkable is that, though Mr Mandelson is thought to be a Tory, he has written a book which, by the well-tried Tory means, we would have to table no fewer than 500 parliamentary questions.

Display of military pyrotechnics deepens unease in Hong Kong over role of elite mainland regiment

China calls with chants of kill

Andrew Higgins in Hong Kong

THRUSTING bayonets to chants of "kill, kill", the People's Liberation Army displayed its might to Hong Kong tycoons yesterday in the first encounter between the money and the muscle that will decide the territory's fate after 1997.

It was a curious start to what was billed as a drive to win the hearts and minds of a population disaffected by the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre. The elite Red First Regiment of the PLA, due to be garrisoned in Hong Kong next year, engaged in noisy mock combat in the border boomtown of Shenzhen.

The multi-billionaire, Li Ka-shing, and other Hong Kong notables on the powerful flying-appointed preparatory committee for handover watched as a helicopter strafed a road and troops fired machineguns, mortars and flame-throwers.

Helmeted soldiers in white gloves lunged with bayonets, screaming menace in Mandarin, still an alien tongue in Cantonese Hong Kong.

Cheung Man-kwong, a Democratic Party member of Hong Kong's legislative council, warned that fear of the PLA would cause "panic in the community" and asked Britain to seek clarification from China on the military's role after 1997.

The pyrotechnics in Shenzhen, which dominated Hong Kong television news last night, coincided with a campaign by Beijing-funded media to calm unease about the intentions of the PLA troops who will raise the Chinese flag on July 1 next year. They will replace a diminished British force now numbering about 3,000.

"Hong Kong compatriots please put your hearts at ease," read a banner headline yesterday in Ta Kung Pao, a leading Communist Party mouthpiece in the colony. Troops selected for duty in Hong Kong, the paper said, were tall, well educated, often computer-literate, mostly English speaking, and fans of Cantonese karaoke, whose tunes include "I Love the Motherland's Hong Kong and Beautiful Bahua" — a refer-



Military manoeuvres... Troops of the People's Liberation Army show off their paces to Hong Kong notables

ence to the territory's official flower. The Red First Regiment traces its origins to the Autumn Harvest Uprising, Mao Zedong's bloody and bungled attempt to incite a peasant revolt in 1927. It later saw action against Japan in the second world war, and against United Nations forces, including American and British troops, in the Korean war. The commander

of the Hong Kong garrison, comprising air, naval and ground units, will be Major-General Liu Zhenwu, aged 51, from Hunan province. No aspect of Hong Kong's transfer of sovereignty causes more anxiety than the role of the PLA, whose assault on Tiananmen Square on June 4, 1989, brought hundreds of thousands on to the streets of Hong Kong in protest.

"Hong Kong people watching television saw the so-called People's Army shooting the people in the nation's capital city," said Martin Lee, leader of the Democratic Party, the biggest group in an elected legislature, which China vows to disband. "Chinese officials say the purpose of the troops — up to 10,000 by some estimates — is to protect Hong Kong. The question is from whom? No one seriously expects the Philippines or Japan to attack Hong Kong."

The Basic Law, the territory's post-1997 constitution, stipulates that the PLA may be called on "when necessary" by the government of the Hong Kong special administrative region to assist in the "maintenance of public order and disaster relief."

Deng Xiaoping, China's all-time leader, defined the tripwire for PLA intervention as "turmoil" — the term he used in 1989 to describe peaceful student-led protests.

The Hong Kong Economic Times has reported that Beijing will outline a timetable for reunification with Taiwan. China declined to comment on the report. Dealers in the foreign exchange market said Taiwan's central bank intervened to defend the local currency against a run after the report.

First night

Viewing art as a voyeur

Robert Clark

Imagined Communities Oldham Art Gallery

IN THE throng of today's Internet village, just what does an artist have to do to get noticed? Quite a lot, if you believe the Parisian, Sophie Calle.

This artist, whose work is part of a strong touring show which runs in Oldham until March 24, posed as a chambermaid to sneak snaps of hotel guests' bedrooms.

She broke several taboos, entering the rooms and secretly unpacking the occupants' personal belongings, arranging them, photographing them and writing down the observations which are framed across the gallery wall: "The drawer is stuffed with handkerchiefs, medication for a deficient pancreas and Gauloise cigarettes... I empty the handbag on the floor: sugar cubes, Tampax, pink lipstick... and an agenda. On the first page I read: 'In the event of my death, everything I own will go to Mr Francis C.'"

This might seem like voyeurism, but the work gets to the heart of the artist's detached perspective and social alienation. Calle's work appears in a South Bank touring show organised by Richard Hyton, one of Britain's more imaginative young curators. It aims to address questions such as has the image of the artist as heroic outcast finally dissolved with the mists of romantic modernism? And, in the age of the Internet, what place is there for such tradi-

tional media as painting and sculpture?

New Yorker Gary Simmons aligns his paintings and photo-works with the back street culture of graffiti and rap. A photographed black kid sticks his hair in front of a heraldic painting blazing the slogan "Wrong nigga to fuck with". Such images of a marginalised yet cohesive and resistant culture are set in contrast to the artist's blurred chalkboard drawings of semi-abstract security.

Tim Rollins and KOS (Kids of Survival) emerge from the same New York streets to infiltrate and reinvent the established culture of post-literary classics. The drawn heads of Major Reagan, Thatcher and Bush are perched atop various beastly bodies. The drawings are scrawled into the pages of Animal Farm, glued together to make a satiric frieze.

Russian artists Komar and Melamid transmit across the Internet the kitsch results of a survey into national popular media dreams. The American Dream is reduced to a chocolate box image of George Washington wandering lost around a pretend frontier landscape.

In contrast, Giuseppe Penone's iron casts of the factory landings, from Halifax's Dean Clough, are more solid and subtle. Indentations made by years of weary trading by workers animate the dead metal with a poignant air of collective melancholy. It is an affirmation of the role of the artist in a world where keyboard operatives have yet to make ordinary workers redundant.

France stops nuclear test programme

Alex Duval Smith in Paris

PRESIDENT Jacques Chirac announced the "definitive end" to France's nuclear testing programme last night, implying that he had been swayed only by military data, not by six months of worldwide protests.

Twenty-four hours after the sixth and biggest nuclear explosion in the South Pacific, he said: "Thanks to the completion of the final series of tests, France will have at its disposal a durable weapon which is reliable and modern. The safety of our country and of our children is assured," he told television viewers in a live broadcast.

At the end of a six-month period in which France has suffered trade boycotts and been vilified by much of the world, Mr Chirac said: "Today I feel I have accomplished one of the prime callings of my office by giving France, for decades to come, the means to secure her safety and independence."

The announcement by Mr Chirac, whose popularity has fallen to an all-time low for a new president, was made in the 50th anniversary year of the bombing of Hiroshima.

Referring to negotiations which are under way in Geneva over the terms of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, he said: "France, as she has already pledged, will play a determined and active role in world disarmament and European defence." His decision to end testing

now is believed to be linked to his visit to the United States later this week. While John Major refused to condemn the tests, President Clinton had expressed regret. The tests — which all exceeded the size of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombs — soured links with France's closest neighbours, including Germany and Italy.

But France claimed that threats of boycotts — especially from Scandinavia and Germany — had rarely been carried through. The Elysee Palace indicated yesterday that Mr Chirac's visit to Japan — cancelled last autumn — looked likely to go ahead.

During the testing campaign at Moruroa and Fangataufa atolls, French naval vessels clashed with Greenpeace campaigners, confiscating their equipment and arresting crew members. As a result, no environmental campaigners were present for the final two tests.

Last night, Rémi Parnetier, president of Greenpeace France, welcomed the announcement. On June 13 last year, Mr Chirac had announced "seven or eight" tests to satisfy the needs of a new generation of M-45 warheads which is to equip French M-45 missiles.

Yesterday's announcement does not mean that France will never again experiment with nuclear weapons. In common with the US and Britain, it will in future rely on laboratory-based simulation technology.

Insider dealing faces 'clean-up'

Proposals intend to end secrecy over suspect transactions in City

Patrick Donovan City Editor

PLANS to "clean-up" the City by making public all formal investigations into insider share-dealing are being drawn up by the Stock Exchange. It emerged yesterday.

The proposals, intended to sweep away the traditional secrecy surrounding all inquiries into suspect dealing transactions, will go to Department of Trade and Industry ministers for approval.

They follow the controversy surrounding high profile insider-dealing allegations, particularly Lord Archer's involvement in dealings in Anglia Television shares just before its take-over by media

giant MAI in 1994. The DTI has subsequently announced no further action is to be taken against the millionaire author and Tory peer.

Traditionally the Stock Exchange never comments on any investigation into suspect share deals unless there is a "degree of public interest". But under the proposals, it would release full details of any transaction it refers for further investigation by the DTT or Serious Fraud Office. Over the last 12 months, it submitted dossiers on 50 major share deals to investigating bodies, although no deals were made public.

The Stock Exchange believes the threat of publicity will deter those tempted to carry out irregular share deals. It regards the reforms

as essential to attempts to win back credibility after last month's ousting of its chief executive, Michael Lawrence.

It has emerged that the Stock Exchange has yet to agree to a pay-off for Mr Lawrence. He is legally entitled to a "golden handshake" worth an estimated £400,000. Mr Lawrence, aged 52, who was paid £342,000 plus a performance bonus of £100,000 in the last financial year, is understood to have been about to announce the insider dealing reforms when he was toppled.

He was ousted after leading institutions made it clear he no longer commanded the City's backing. The immediate cause of his downfall was plans to introduce changes to the way shares are traded across the City of London.

It is understood Mr Lawrence has been asked to appear before the Treasury Select Committee, which is to

investigate fully the management crisis surrounding the Stock Exchange.

One highly-placed source claimed the campaign to force Mr Lawrence's resignation was masterminded by BZW, the brokerage arm of Barclay's Bank. The broker, a leading player in the City, last year threatened to resign its membership of the London Stock Exchange unless Mr Lawrence backtracked on planned reforms. BZW feared its huge investment in broking operations would suffer if he succeeded in opening up the market to more competition. However, the broker quietly dropped its resignation threat after it became clear other players were not prepared to follow suit. It concentrated on behind-the-scenes lobbying which earlier last month resulted in Mr Lawrence's resignation.

Notesbook, page 11

Miss Piggy still packs a punch to beat off villains in Muppet raid



Stolen: Ernie and Bert

San Traynor in Bonn KERMIT was his usual imperturbable self. But Waldorf and Statler were being treated for shock. And Ernie and Bert? They had vanished into the night.

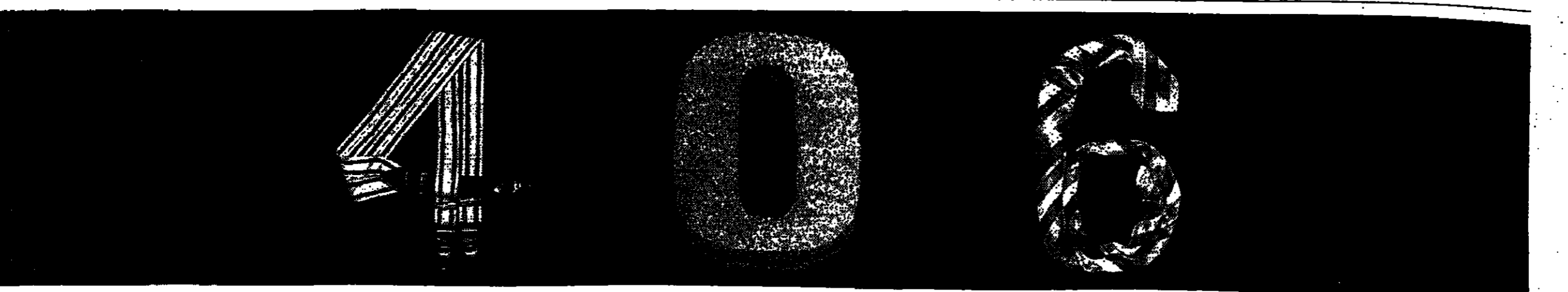
Promoters in the Baltic city of Rostock clearly had better things in mind last year when they organised a tour of Germany by 40 of the best-loved puppet creations of Jim Henson, designer of The Muppet Show and Sesame Street. Unknown malefactors entered the exhibition hall in the eastern German city of Erfurt in the dark of

night to spirit away Miss Piggy. But the born survivor apparently put up stiff resistance, for the villains had to abandon the attempt, damaging her glass display case but failing to get their hands on Miss Piggy herself.

Waldorf and Statler, the grumpy senior citizens, also fought off the assault, but Ernie and Bert succumbed. All that remained of them yesterday were smashed glass and empty pedestals. Nordstar, the Rostock promotions company that launched the exhibition, put the insurance value of the missing Muppets — 20-year-old originals — at

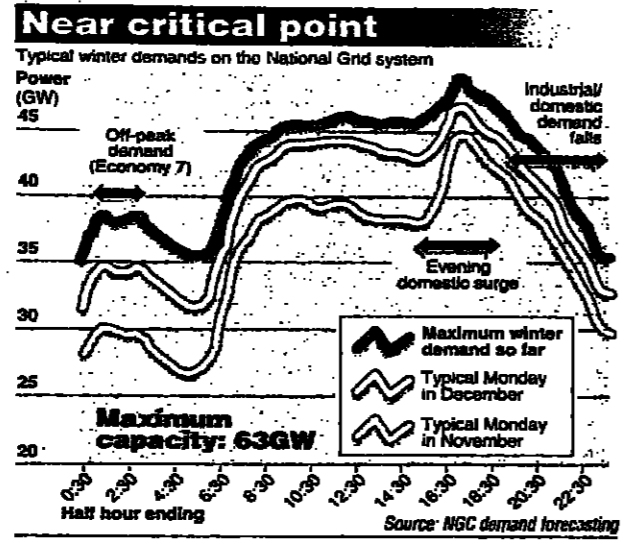
£82,000. Miss Piggy's worth is obviously inestimable, but a rough insurance value would be about £36,000.

"It's very sad," said Jana Blaschka of Nordstar. "We need to close the exhibition until Saturday, but we hope to restart then. We're bringing in another two puppets from New York." "It's funny Miss Piggy's still there," said an Erfurt police spokesman. "They smashed her case as well, but they never got their hands on her, just Bert and Ernie." "There was no external sign of break-in. They must have got in with pass-keys," a policeman said.



مكتبة الامم المتحدة

سوانا الراج



Heroes in grey suits avert Sindleham Syndrome

John Mullin monitors a power surge at the Berkshire HQ of National Grid

NESTLED amid the Berkshire gloom in the village of Sindleham, just along from where the BMWs jostle to pick up children from Barewood College and near the golf-course, sits a rather important building: HQ for National Grid Control for England and Wales. Without it, the electricity generators would be unable to operate, the regional companies would find it impossible to supply the consumer and teacups throughout the country would remain empty.

It was crisis day yesterday, not that anyone would have noticed. For those hoping for control centres featured in James Bond films, where uniformed lackeys throw switches and sound alarms for some



Screen test... the cinema screen-sized map at the National Grid control centre showing power stations and supply lines throughout England and Wales. PHOTOGRAPH: SEAN SMITH

criminal mastermind, it was a disappointment. A dozen grey-suited chaps, looking for all the world like accountants, sat gazing at computer screens.

The demand for electricity reached an all-time high last Thursday — beating the previous best in 1987 — as people returning from work switched on their kettles, television sets and heating. The record peaked at 48,800 megawatts, the equivalent, as a manager helpfully put it, of almost 49 million electric fires.

As a result, John Scott, national control manager, and his team awaited yesterday with trepidation. Large margins cost a floated privatised utility dear, and the National Grid Control likes to keep as low an excess of capacity over

demand as possible. But with the problems of some gas-fired stations over the weekend and temperatures dropping again, there were fears that a new record would be set. Worse: there might be too little capacity to suffice.

At least, those were the hopeful worries among the journalists packing the glass-fronted viewing gallery. It might have looked a little like the China Syndrome but Mr Scott and his assistant, John Tomlinson, were more sanguine. Mr Tomlinson predicted demand might peak at about 49,000, but the power generators were doing well and there was a generous margin of safety.

Not that it really mattered too much if capacity should be exceeded. Lights

would be dimmed in homes all over the country but there was no question of forced disconnection.

As 5pm approached — the start of the so-called half-hour darkness peak — Roger Kenyon, production manager, recalled the greatest surge the National Grid had experienced: when Chris Waddle blasted over the bar in England's 1990 World Cup semi-final penalty shoot-out. "We expected demand to soar within 10 seconds or so; in fact, it was a full two minutes. People were shocked into inaction." Electricity had surged by 2,900 megawatts as England's supporters recovered.

The half-hour darkness peak grew closer and the demand being fulfilled, with help from imported

Electricity 'at the limit'

continued from page 1

Association, and a member of the Government's energy advisory panel, called on the industry watchdog, Stephen Littlechild, to take greater account of consumers' security.

He said that many gas-fired stations were supplied by British Gas on terms that allowed it to axe supply if the company felt it necessary to preserve resources for domestic consumers.

Gas-fired stations on these contracts obtained gas at cheaper prices.

Industry sources suggested that British Gas had stopped supplies to five gas-fired stations late last week. Medway Power, part-owned by Seaboard and Southern Electric and based in the South-east where there is a shortage of generating capacity, confirmed that it had been forced off the Grid by loss of gas supplies. All five stations were generating at peak demand yesterday.

Steve Thomas, a senior fellow at the Science Policy Research Unit at Sussex University, said that since privatisation, electricity generators did not feel it was their responsibility if the lights went out.

British Gas insisted it had to protect supplies to the public ahead of large firms which had signed up for cheaper gas on the understanding sup-

plies could be interrupted. Power stations on such contracts were supposed to have alternative means of supply.

Pointing out that demand had reached a new record last Thursday, its Transco division said one large industrial user could consume as much gas as 100,000 domestic consumers.

The Electricity Pool, which draws up schedules for electricity generation depending on commercial criteria, said last night that the question of whether gas-fired plants were at risk of being cut off was for the National Grid to consider.

The Grid also came close to collapse last summer and in November.

'clean-up'

Tories and Labour plan graduate tuition tax

John Carvel
Education Editor

PLANS for a tax on graduates to recoup part of the cost of student maintenance and tuition are being prepared amid tight security on both Conservative and Labour front benches for publication in a few months.

The proposal breaches the principle that students are not charged fees for a first degree and runs counter to the fashion for cutting taxes rather than inventing them.

It is being seen as the most plausible option for maintaining growth in student numbers without an excessive burden on public spending or compromising the quality of university education.

Under the "income-contingent" loan scheme, part of the cost of higher education would be transferred to the undergraduate and funded by a more generous student loan, repayable through tax or national insurance after the student graduated and was earning enough to afford the monthly instalments.

There would be no levy on those who graduated before the plan was implemented.

On the Government side, a green paper is due "within two or three months". It is expected to present the graduate tax as one of a range of op-

tions to contain the cost of reaching the target of sending 33 per cent of young people to university.

Ministers are likely to avoid backing the scheme before the general election unless it gains widespread acceptance. They are being advised, however, that reform of university funding is the area of education policy which brings the Government and Labour closest to a consensus.

John Smith, the former Labour leader, took the higher education portfolio away from Jeff Rooker two years ago when he voiced similar proposals. But David Blunkett, shadow education secretary, is understood to be convinced that loans repayable through the tax system are the only alternative to a catastrophic under-funding of universities.

According to Labour sources, the only questions were how progressive the scheme could be made — for example, by delaying repayments until graduates reached a relatively high income and allowing a long pay-back period — and whether to use the national insurance system or an earmarked tax.

The Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals yesterday circulated plans to charge an emergency £300 levy on first-year undergradu-

ates unless the Government pledges to reverse the latest round of higher education spending cuts. Diana Warwick, the committee's chief executive, said funding per student was being cut by a further 9.4 per cent by 1998/9.

The 104 vice-chancellors will decide on Friday whether to tell ministers that the levy will be imposed in September 1997 unless they agree by the end of this year to introduce an income-contingent loan scheme before 2000.

Under a proposal by Professor Gareth Roberts, the committee chairman and vice-chancellor of Sheffield, the £300 emergency levy would be paid by 140,000 first-year undergraduates. Poorer students on a full maintenance grant would be exempt. The committee expects this to total £40-£50 million.

Ministers are understood to be considering a sweeter to the universities before the vice-chancellors meet on Friday to head off the threat.

Professor Roberts was last night circulating his colleagues recommending support for the ultimatum for a levy. However, a Guardian survey of vice-chancellors showed that most were sceptical.

Letters, page 5; High-stake society, page 9; Survey findings, page 10



Garry Wesser's winning black and white photograph

Prizes for Guardian photographers

FOUR Guardian photographers were honoured last night's UK Picture Editors' Guild award ceremony.

Garry Wesser received the prize for the best black and white photograph, and Dennis Thorpe won the Lord Mayor's Award for the best business and industry photograph. Roger Allen, of the Daily Mirror, was photographer of the year.

in business and industry, received special awards for their work.

The Guardian also won the Newspaper of the Year award for the best use of black and white photography.

Roger Allen, of the Daily Mirror, was photographer of the year.

Dennis Thorpe photograph, page 11

Woman under protection was raped by stalker

Duncan Campbell
Crime Correspondent

A WOMAN who was raped in her home by a man who had been stalking her for months was under police protection at the time of the attack, it emerged yesterday.

The rape has prompted calls for a change in the law on stalking. Campaigners claim the police do not have sufficient powers to step in before the stalker becomes violent, as a significant number do.

The police have defended the operation and said the woman was satisfied with the security provided.

Cambridge police confirmed yesterday that a woman, aged in her 30s, was raped in her home near Huntingdon by a man who had stalked her twice before. He had been stalking her for four months.

Detective Superintendent Tony Rogers, who is heading the investigation, said the woman was raped on January 17 after her attacker knocked on her door. The attack was so violent she had only been able to provide the full details in the last few days.

The woman, who is married with children, was first approached by her attacker four months ago when she was having coffee in a hotel near her home. He followed her to



Police issued this artist's impression of the attacker

which occurred during the day, was "a savage attack" which had left the victim badly injured and very traumatised.

He said the woman was satisfied with the level of security she had been given. The police were not prepared to discuss what measures had been taken, but in such cases a stalker's target is often issued with a "panic button" connected to the nearest police station.

Last year's Criminal Justice Act increased the penalties for "intentional harassment" to six months imprisonment and a £5,000 fine, but anti-stalking campaigners say it is inadequate.

Evonne von Heussen, of the National Anti-stalking and Harassment Campaign, said last night that proposals for a change in the law on stalking, had been placed with the Home Office.

"We need legislation that will give the police power to act," she said. Too often police were only able to act after an attack.

She added that 5,500 victims of stalking, of whom 30 per cent had been raped, had contacted the campaign. It conducted a survey of victims which found that around 80 per cent were former partners of their stalker, 15 per cent were casual acquaintances, and 5 per cent were strangers.

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'Decline is taking place particularly in inner city working-class neighbourhoods which have been hit by poverty and unemployment'

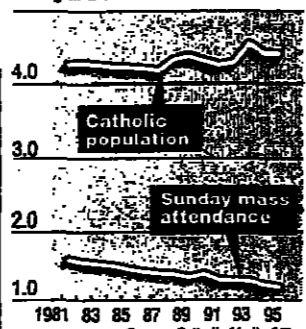
Catholic church loses mass appeal

Madeleine Bunting on the drift away from Rome, despite celebrity converts such as the Duchess of Kent and Alan Clark

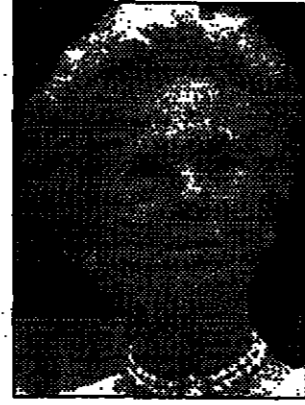
DESPITE the glamour of a string of celebrity converts such as the Duchess of Kent and Alan Clark, the Roman Catholic Church is losing its mass appeal. The number attending Sunday Mass fell between 1988 and 1995 by nearly 200,000 to 1,190,207, according to the latest figures published in the 1996 Catholic Directory. Last year's figure was 36,000 down, a fall of 3 per cent.

Of the estimated 4.5 million Catholics, fewer than a third were in church on an average Sunday last year. Liverpool, once a traditional Catholic stronghold, comes bottom of the attendance league with 19 per cent. The Welsh diocese of Menevia comes top with 36 per cent, narrowly beating Westminster. "We would like to see more often," admitted a spokesman for the Catholic Media Office. "But the pattern of worship is changing. All Catholics are supposed to go to Mass every Sunday and the laxity with which this

Falling attendance
Estimated Catholic mass attendance in England and Wales, Millions.



Source: Catholic Media Office



The road to Rome: the Duchess of Kent (left), Alan Clark and Ann Widdecombe

rule is interpreted is another sign of the weakening hold of the hierarchy. The figures have serious financial implications for the church and charities which depend on Sunday collec-

tions. Even more pessimistic private studies by the Catholic university of Louvain commissioned by Cafod, the overseas aid charity as part of its marketing research, predict a halving of regular Mass atten-

dence by 2005 to below 600,000. Kevin Thomas of the Catholic Media Office attributed the decline to the growing assimilation of what was once a largely Irish immigrant Cath-

olic community into the mainstream, in which religious affiliation is less important to their identity. "In a sense we are victims of our success. Catholics are only just beginning to get into

a position where they are well established and confident. "Until recently it was acceptable for high profile public figures to be openly anti-Catholic. "In some respects, that's negative because when it was more of an immigrant community there was a need for solidarity and people went to church for that. "The decline in Catholicism shows no sign of abating, claims Peter Brierley, director of Christian Research, while the decline in Anglicanism is easing off. "From studies of Catholicism in Scotland, the worst drop has been in the early 1990s and the decline is taking place particularly in inner city working-class neighbourhoods which have been badly hit by poverty and unemployment. "It is more stable in middle

class and rural areas," added Mr Brierley. The Catholic church can take comfort in two sets of statistics which surprisingly buck the trend. Despite a drop of half a million in the numbers attending Mass since 1981, children are still being baptised at the rate of about 75,000 a year. The figure is particularly high in the Westminster diocese which covers central London; this would seem to support the explanation that parents are eager to get their children into Catholic schools. The number of adult conversions have also increased slightly from 5,731 in 1981 to 6,000 in 1994, reflecting the much publicised appeal of Rome to disenchanted Anglicans such as government ministers such as John Gummer and Ann Widdecombe.

Prosaic warning for M-way fighters in poet's river valley



Tree-dwellers sit tight as the under sheriff reads the eviction notice ordering them to leave Daisy Nook. David Ward reports

MOTORWAY protesters vowed yesterday to defend a river valley celebrated by a much-loved dialect poet who died 100 years ago this month. They gave a cool reception to Andrew Wilson, under sheriff of Greater Manchester, when he visited Daisy Nook on the Tameside-Oldham border in Greater Manchester where opponents of the £290 million M66 extension to the east of Manchester have camped since last July. Rather than recite from the works of Ben Brierley (1825-96), whose life is commemorated in an exhibition at nearby Fallsword library, Mr Wilson chose to read an eviction notice issued by the High Court in Manchester. "Take notice

that any person in occupation of this area is hereby requested to leave within the next 48 hours and to remove his or her personal possessions..." Brierley is more lyrical in this prose: "In the field through which we pass, some 20 cows are browsing. How they stare to see a stranger pass! Lower down a wild colt is carering round the pasture, now stopping suddenly at the gate as if it had intended to leap over it and then changed its mind. I hear the sound of a scythe... there are such strange sweet echoes speaking to each other across the valley that I cannot distinguish whence a sound proceeds." If the protests fail, those sweet sounds will soon give way to the noise of contrac-



Breakfast as usual... part of the camp at Daisy Nook, a refuge for local people. Above left, on guard outside a tree house. PHOTOGRAPHS: CHRIS THOMSON

tors creating the final 15-mile link in the motorway box surrounding Manchester.

As a protester, Paul, finished his breakfast. Mr Wilson noted the five tree dwellings, the lavatory with his name on its door, and the clapped-out lorry on which a scaffolding tower is rising. The site is small and easily accessible, apparently offering fewer difficulties than the M66 site near

Blackburn where Mr Wilson brought in the balliffs last summer. But he added: "Any operation involving tree houses and aerial walkways is potentially dangerous. We will take all the precautions we can to minimise that danger." Another protester, Pete, who has slept high in a

Daisy Nook tree for six months, helped set up both the M65 and M66 protest camps. "This is a green space surrounded by an urban area and is one of the easiest places of its kind to get to in Manchester." Thanks to Brierley, Daisy Nook became a place of refuge for workers in local mills. Local residents have

joined the fight to save it. "The motorway will devastate this area," said Barry Jones who lives in a terrace close to the planned road line. "I've got neighbours in their 80s who have lived here all their lives and are really put out. They're talking about chaining themselves to the trees."

Guards at bypass 'fear for health and safety'

John Vidal

PIVATE security guards at the site of the Newbury bypass are living in deteriorating health conditions and an increasingly dangerous atmosphere, according to two men who have resigned in the past few days.

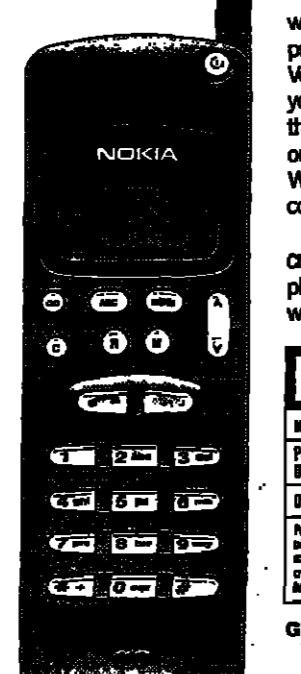
The former guards told the Guardian that pipes have frozen and chemical toilets have stopped working. More than 400 men are having to defecate behind dormitories or in the woods. "In terms of safety alone that place should be closed down," said one man, a retired probation officer, who asked not to be named. "The behaviour of people is appalling. I felt sickened."

"The atmosphere of the camp is becoming increasingly paranoid. There is a sense of fear as a culture of potential violence builds up. "People are looking for action. You are considered a 'virgin' if you have not had a 'rumble' — a physical confrontation with the protesters. There was as much danger of violence among guards as against protesters. Only the presence of TV cameras and press had restrained it."

He said that when he went to the site he was told he would be a passive observer. "Within three hours I was being asked to pull a woman by her ankles out of a tree." Another guard who asked not to be named said: "Someone is going to get really hurt. I have left because I know there is big trouble there. "I've got neighbours in response to a Guardian investigation last week of the security operation at Newbury. Hugo Young, page 9

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Water profits 'creamed off'

Rebecca Smithers
Political Correspondent

CUSTOMERS have had to pay an extra £294 million for the delivery of water over the last three years, according to a Labour Party report based on data from the industry regulator, Ofwat.

The shadow environment secretary, Frank Dobson, will use the information in today's Labour-initiated Commons debate, the first to focus on the entire industry since last summer's drought. He will attack the industry for denying the public information about what services they pay for, while "creaming off" extra profits. The report, published today and based on information provided by the water industry itself, reveals that the annual cost to customers of delivering water has risen by 13 per cent since 1991/92. Labour claims that the main reason for this is that dividends from water operations — which have risen by more than one-third over the same period — have been ploughed back into their parent companies.

The 10 main water service companies in England and Wales were privatised in 1989, but the figures on water delivery are only available for the last three years. Mr Dobson will criticise the companies for publishing a figure showing the cost in terms of "pence per cubic metre", which was meaning-

less to most customers. Other disclosures are: Last year the industry made more profit than at any time since privatisation, while investing less than at any time since privatisation. Dividends from the water companies' parent groups have increased by a cumulative total of \$458 million since privatisation. The water companies allow 826 million gallons of water to leak from their pipes every day. The rate of leakage is more than half a million gallons every minute. They make a profit of £3,702 every minute. Since privatisation, more than 68 million customers have contacted the water companies with queries about their bills.

Last night, the Water Services Association, which represents the industry, claimed that investment in real terms was now more than double the level before privatisation, whereas prices had increased by about 40 per cent. Since 1989 "a considerable amount" had been invested in the distribution system, with leakage levels "now significantly lower than they would otherwise have been".

The Environment Secretary, John Gummer, has recently admitted that companies should have dealt with the drought better. But during the drought he said: "I am very impressed with what the water companies have done. The fruit is this wonderful sun."

Co-pilot lands holiday jet after heart attack kills captain

Vivak Chaudhary

AHOLIDAY airliner carrying 220 passengers was landed safely by the co-pilot after the captain died of a heart attack as the plane approached Malaga airport in Spain. It was revealed yesterday.

The Britania Airways Boeing 757, which left Luton on Sunday, was at 12,000 feet when Captain Roger Attenborough, 54, collapsed. Paramedics treated him at the airport but he was pronounced dead at Santa Helena hospital, Torremolinos.

Mr Attenborough's son Royd, also a pilot, said yesterday: "The only consolation is that he died flying. It was a job he loved and it was all he ever wanted to do. "Dad passed all his six month medicals with flying colours. Fortunately, he died with no risk to the passengers thanks to the professionalism and training of his co-pilot." Captain Attenborough and his wife also have one other son. The family live at Kempston near Bedford. He joined the airline in 1969 and had been captain for 20 years. He had been flying Boeing 757s for the past five. Roger Bunnell, managing director of Britania Airways said: "We are all deeply saddened and shocked." The Civil Aviation Authority, which lays down health regulations for flight crews, said it could not recall a singular incident in the past 20 years.

Chinook crash theory scorned

John Vidal

ACHINOOK pilot told an inquiry yesterday he did not "for one minute" accept the findings of an RAF board of inquiry into the Mull of Kintyre helicopter crash, in which 29 people died.

The pilot said he believed the giant helicopter's controls had jammed, forcing it into a collision course with a hillside. He considered the board's finding that the pilot had chosen the wrong rate of climb as "unlikely in the extreme".

The pilot, who cannot be named on security grounds, was appearing as a witness for the family of Fl Lt Jonathan Tapper, the helicopter's captain, at a fatal accident inquiry in Paisley, Strathclyde. He and another Chinook pilot also told the inquiry that Fl Lt Tapper, like most other Chinook pilots, had repeatedly expressed concerns that

the newly-introduced Mark Two Chinook was less capable than the Mark One it replaced, and that he had not had time to familiarise himself with it. The RAF board of inquiry concluded the most likely explanation for the crash in June 1994, which killed the four-man RAF crew and 25 passengers, including Ulster's top anti-terrorist RUC, military and MIB officials, was a rate of climb too low to clear the Mull.

The Paisley inquiry has been told that less than a mile from the Mull, the pilot changed from fly-by-sight to instrument rules. But the pilot giving evidence thought it inconceivable the helicopter would be that close to land, out of visual contact, and below its safety altitude. The inquiry continues.

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Musician's glittering career writing jingles blighted by injuries from King's Cross fire

£650,000 for Tube blaze victim

Sarah Boseley

MUSICIAN, whose hopes of making a fortune writing advertising jingles were wrecked by injuries he sustained in the King's Cross fire, was awarded £650,000 agreed damages in the High Court by London Regional Transport yesterday.

'People were maimed and killed and they threw the survivors to the sharks'

poser of advertising jingles. But the severe burns to his hands left the skin too painful and delicate to play the guitar.

He endured 18 operations under general anaesthetic and one which involved cutting the sides of his fingers to release dead tissue which, for medical reasons, had to be carried out without anaesthetic.

So far LRT has paid out over £4 million in damages. Kwasi Afari-Minta, a record producer, was paid £50,000 shortly after the disaster as an interim payment by LRT.

the Lipsius case hinged on estimated loss of earnings. Ticket collector Mahendra Parmar, described by his counsel, George Pulman, QC, as "one of the heroes of the fire" for staying to the last possible moment to help people get out, was awarded £375,616 for psychological damage in November 1994. Linda Townsley, widow of the firefighter Colin Townsley, 48, who was killed when he stayed to help a badly burned woman in the ticket hall, was awarded £250,000 in April 1988. Mr Townsley died a hero's death, it was said at the High Court, of asphyxiation.

Had the case been argued, Queen guitarist Brian May, who had heard some of his pre-fire tapes, would have testified in "extremely glowing" terms to the ability of Mr Lipsius, who held the American equivalent of a first-class degree in music and had good contacts in the advertising world through his wife, Sally. A recent attempt at playing the guitar made his hands bleed but he could play and compose to some extent on a computer-based keyboard.

"His hope, before the fire, was not that he was going to be the next Eric Clapton necessarily but that he would enter the world of jingles," said his counsel, Colin Mackay, QC.

Mr Lipsius, of Hammersmith, west London, had been travelling with a friend's mother on the night of the fire. His companion died. He sustained his injuries when he put up his hands to shield his face from the fireball that swept through the ticket hall.

After the hearing, Mr Lipsius said: "I am disappointed. It was not what I was hoping for. I was hoping for a lot more but it's a risky business and you just have to settle for less or go through an incredible amount of stress — and maybe get less."

He said he "hated" London Transport. "I think they are a wicked organisation. I think their cumulative incompetence caused hell on earth on November 18, 1987. They've shown no remorse. They have no good will. People were maimed and killed and they threw the survivors to the sharks."

Mr Lipsius said the money would help him get on with his life and go towards building a recording studio at his home. "My plans are still in music. That's what I do."



Ron Lipsius and wife, Sally, after receiving the largest damages awarded over the 1987 Tube fire PHOTOGRAPH: RICHARD LEWIS

Homes plan to provide old age care

David Brindle and Richard Thomas

HOMEOWNERS should be allowed to pledge a fixed share of their properties as insurance against long-term care fees, a left-of-centre think tank proposed yesterday.

The Institute for Public Policy Research said the scheme would carry no public spending implications. It would give people both the certainty of a maximum care bill and the security of knowing they would not lose their homes. However, a report for the Institute by London Economics, a leading consultancy, says the idea would only partly solve the problem. In the longer term, a new and more radical form of care insurance is likely to be needed.

Restoring faith in public insurance will almost certainly involve re-casting the relationship between individual and state," says the report by a team led by Edward Richards, formerly adviser to Gordon Brown, the shadow chancellor.

The report is probably the most definitive analysis to date of long-term care. Because of the growing number of elderly people, the costs — excluding the contribution of unpaid carers — are projected to grow from £12 billion last year to £36.6 billion in 2031.

Introducing a "pay-as-you-go" scheme in which people now in work pay for the care of those in retirement, would require an insurance levy starting today at 1.8 per cent of earnings and rising to 5 per cent by 2031, according to the report.

An alternative scheme in which people in work pay for their own future care, would cost 0.8 per cent of earnings but would also involve transitional costs for older workers: £3,500 each for those over 40, rising to £6,000 for the over-60s.

Partial coverage would cut costs. Leaving the individual to meet accommodation costs, as opposed to nursing bills, would cut pay-as-you-go contributions to 1.2 per cent now and 3.5 per cent in 2031, while funded contributions would fall to 0.5 per cent.

The report says such schemes need to be considered in the long run in tandem with what it calls "partial equity release insurance" (Peri), which could be introduced almost immediately.

Under existing care rules, a single man aged 65 would need to pledge a 20.8 per cent stake in a property worth £80,000. A couple, both aged 65, would need to pledge 44.8 per cent. Limiting cover to three years' care could cut these stakes respectively to 13.8 per cent and 29.4 per cent.

Mr Richards said other forms of equity, such as portfolios, could be brought into the scope of a Peri. "This is not a panacea, and the state will still have to provide a means-tested safety net. But it is a way of increasing flexibility and coverage."

Paying for Long-term Care: £100, 30 St George Street, London WC2E 7RA; £9.95

Child bride 'will not be put into care if she comes home'

Sally Waale

A HIGH Court judge who last week ordered Sarah Cook, aged 18, to return from Turkey, where she went through an illegal marriage ceremony three weeks ago, said yesterday that she would not be taken away from her parents and put in care if she came home.

Sarah, of Braintree, Essex, was made a ward of court last week. Sir Stephen Brown, president of the High Court Family Division, said that the court was concerned with wardship proceedings, not care proceedings. "Essex County Council has no intention at present to take Sarah into care and away from her parents..."

"I would wish to say that wardship is not a procedure which represents any threat or application which might prejudice anybody. What is desired is to enable the court to further the welfare of Sarah and to ensure her protection."

Sir Stephen, adjourning the case for further inquiries, said he hoped the emotional climate surrounding the case could now be lowered.

Sarah has defied attempts to persuade her back to Britain and remains in Karamanmaraş, south-eastern Turkey, where her "husband", Musa Komeagac, aged 18, is in jail facing a charge of statutory rape.

Sarah's mother, Jackie, aged 37, has flown to Turkey to try to persuade her to comply with the court order to return "forthwith".

Student held in connection with murder of schoolgirl

Geoffrey Gibbs

POLICE in South Wales yesterday arrested a 19-year-old college student for questioning in connection with the rape and murder of Cardiff schoolgirl Claire Hood a year ago.

The teenager, who has not been named, was arrested early yesterday at his home on the St Mellons estate, close to where 15-year-old Claire lived with her mother and younger sister.

Detective Chief Inspector Stuart Lewis described the arrest as a significant development but said inquiries were continuing.

The breakthrough came 10 days after police renewed their appeal for information on the first anniversary of Claire's murder.

Claire, a pupil at Rumney High School, was reported missing by her mother on January 18 last year. Her partly-clothed body was found the following day by a cyclist, close to a footpath in Cwll Coch Woods, half a mile from her home.

A team of up to 50 detectives has been working on the case and nearly 30,000 people have either given statements or been interviewed. Samples have enabled forensic experts to build up a genetic "fingerprint" of the killer. Around 2,000 men volunteered blood samples or mouth swabs in a mass DNA testing operation. Officers yesterday refused to say whether the suspect was among those asked to take the DNA test.

Letter spells out writer's passion

John Ezard reads between the lines of 'priceless find'



George Eliot: 'marriage' joy

A LETTER bursting with the 19th century author George Eliot's joy about the great love of her life has been discovered among papers sent to a Museum.

"All one's notion of things before seem like the reading of a mystic inscription without the key," she writes of her illicit relationship with George Henry Lewes, a married man whose adulterous wife refused to divorce him.

The letter was "a thrilling discovery" Kathleen Adams, secretary of the George Eliot Fellowship, said yesterday. It reveals her exaltation over her "marriage" and discloses how the novelist, real name Mary Ann Evans, was reconciled with one of her

closest, most influential woman friends, Cara Bray. Mrs Bray and her husband Charles, a freethinking ribbon manufacturer who edited the Coventry Herald, helped introduce the young Eliot to a world beyond her upbringing by her widowed father. "She began to meet some of the most prominent thinkers of her time", Mrs Adams said. But they ostracised her when she started living with Lewes in 1854, when she was 35. The letter — dated two years later — is apparently a reply to an overture from Cara. It says: "It was a great experience — this marriage. I can't tell you how happy I am in this double life, which helps me to feel and think with double strength. I shouldn't

say these things unless I love you very dearly as I do. Ever your old (yet new), Marian", the name she adopted from her two Christian names, Mary Ann. Shortly afterwards she began her first successful novel, Adam Bede.

The manuscript was in a box of letters and postcards relating to two well-known local families, the Brays and Fridlanders. The box was sent to the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum in Coventry, where a copy will go on display with other George Eliot memorabilia. The manuscript will be kept in Coventry records office. Margaret Kyllat, collections manager at the gallery, said, "We believe it to be a priceless find".

Pensioner beaten to death while family watched TV

Geoffrey Gibbs

A KINDLY pensioner regarded as a Santa Claus figure by local children has been hounded to death in the front room of his Cornish home while four of his relatives were watching television across the hall.

Douglas Holman, aged 72, a retired nurse, was found unconscious in an armchair by his niece on Saturday afternoon when she went to tell him about a phone call.

He had massive head injuries and died in the ambulance taking him to hospital. Police said there were no obvious signs of a struggle or break-in at the home Mr Holman shared with his niece in Camborne. Injuries to Mr Holman's

head and face were caused by a sharp instrument. Items found in the house were taken for forensic examination.

Detective Superintendent John Smith, who is leading the inquiry, said police were particularly keen to speak to anyone who was in the area between about 3pm and 4.30pm on Saturday.

He said Mr Holman was friendly with local children. "We think large numbers of youngsters used to visit the premises over a number of years and they may be in possession of vital information which may be of use to us."

Officers have spoken to three children thought to be the last people to see Mr Holman alive. Mr Smith said Mr Holman was being visited by relatives on the day he died.

Advertisement for Continental Airlines. It features the words 'STRETCHED.' and 'LIMO.' in large, bold letters. Below 'STRETCHED.' is an illustration of a person lying in a First Class sleeper seat on an airplane. Below 'LIMO.' is an illustration of a Continental limousine. The text describes the service: 'BUSINESSFIRST In the air, a First Class sleeper seat in First Class space, giving you 15 extra inches of legroom. On the ground, a limousine to take you to the airport and another to meet your plane on arrival! All for a Business Class fare. Continental's BusinessFirst non-stop daily from London Gatwick and Manchester to New York or Gatwick to Houston — and on to over 115 U.S. cities. See your travel agent or call Continental on 0800 747800.' The Continental Airlines logo is in the bottom right corner.

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Chernomyrdin hopes to win \$9.5bn IMF loan Russia assures US reform goes on

Martin Walker in Washington and David Hearst in Moscow

THE Russian prime minister, Viktor Chernomyrdin, sought to woo President Clinton yesterday with promises that economic and political reform would continue "with certain corrections". His aim was to prise loose the \$9.5 billion (€8.1 billion) International Monetary Fund credits which are now being reviewed.

The visit by Mr Chernomyrdin, for one of the regular meetings of the economic co-operation commission he chairs with Vice-President Al Gore, was the first high-level meeting between the two countries since the Russian elections last year and the Kremlin reshuffle this month, which purged prominent liberals and market reformers.

In sessions with President Clinton and Mr Gore, Mr Chernomyrdin stressed that Russia's privatisation and free enterprise reforms were "irreversible". He also said the Russian government was still committed to the IMF financial stabilisation programme, to co-operating with Nato in Bosnia and to a negotiated settlement in Chechnia.

Elections this year in both Russia and the US could inspire "some improper interpretation of events" and misleading political rhetoric, Mr Chernomyrdin warned, trying to reinforce telephone assurances about reform made by President Yeltsin to President Clinton on Friday.

But the Chernomyrdin visit to Washington has brought back cold war memories of an inscrutable Kremlin whose intentions in domestic and foreign policy baffle and divide Western analysts, despite a free press and open debates on policy in the Duma.

The US Moscow ambassador Tom Pickering is looking on the bright side, however, and insisting that "the glass is more than half full, with successful democratic elections and economic production starting to rise again".

The Russian presidential election this summer has sent President Yeltsin on a public spending spree which has mystified deputies and economists.

Faced with plaintive cries from millions of unpaid workers, Mr Yeltsin has in the last few days promised a \$3.8 billion fund to pay public workers. At the same time, \$3 billion for the reconstruction of Chechnia, \$1.4 billion to the mining industry, \$86 million in unpaid wages to miners, a



French leave... A French soldier shifts sandbags from an observation post in the Sarajevo suburb of Skanderija yesterday as his unit moves to a Serb suburb. Behind him is a sculpture from the 1984 Olympics, when Skanderija staged the ice skating PHOTOGRAPH: DEGI DELIC

EU ministers firm on monetary union date

John Palmer in Brussels

EUROPEAN Union foreign ministers yesterday shrugged aside British government warnings of a looming crisis of credibility in the plans for economic and monetary union in 1999.

The European Commission, which contemptuously dismissed suggestions of a secret plan to delay the launch of the single currency, expressed confidence that most EU countries would qualify for EMU by the deadline.

Suggestions last week from a "senior government source" in London that the monetary union project might have to be revised in the next few months were dismissed in Brussels as predictable trouble-making by British ministers.

"The UK view does not reflect the views of a majority of member states," the Irish foreign minister, Dick Spring, said. "It would be rather tragic if we were to even speculate about a change in the timetable so soon after the Madrid summit."

The Foreign Secretary, Malcolm Rifkind, tried to pour further doubt on the ability of the EU to meet the 1999 deadline.

"Everyday almost, senior European statesmen from France, from Germany, from Spain and from other countries express doubt or uncertainty as to whether 1999 is a realistic target," he said.

"I doubt if this can go on day after day, week after week, without some serious credibility problem... Those that are committed to that date... are going to have to provide more than statements, more than assertions, if (1999) is to be seen as something that can be achieved."

During a televised debate on the Italian presidency programme for the EU, foreign ministers lined up to dismiss talk of changing either

'Employment must be a priority. We can't allow 20m to fall by the wayside'

the timetable or the conditions for monetary union set out in the Maastricht treaty. But they did underline the urgent need for action to provide jobs for the EU's 20 million unemployed.

Today the German government will present a package of measures, agreed with the trade unions and employers, to create more than 300,000 jobs. Other governments are considering whether a similar package - in which unions concede more flexible working methods, governments cut employment taxes and employers create new jobs - might be agreed at EU level.

"France will meet the

Serb trippers find joy and tears in Sarajevo

The Orthodox church remains intact after four years of war, but old friendships have not been so lucky, writes Julian Borger

BORKA was keen but Mira was having second thoughts. A day out in Sarajevo had seemed like a big adventure the evening before, but Mira was now refusing to go.

Borka did all she could to persuade her friend that their world had changed since the Dayton peace agreement. Soldiers had been pulled off the front line, checkpoints had been dismantled and it was now possible for two 19-year-old Serb girls to cross the front line for an afternoon of window shopping and cafe-hopping in Sarajevo.

For the past few days it had been their constant topic of conversation. Between the city centre and their homes in the Serb suburb of Ilidza there were only French troops who waved you through.

They talked about the shops and cafes they remembered from their

street. Appearing a coward and missing everything, she had decided, weighed heavier than her fear.

Between Ilidza and central Sarajevo there is a mile of scorched no man's land. Shops, houses and offices have been reduced to shattered stumps. Borka wept when she saw it. Mira laughed into silence.

The city opened up in front of them. The squalid tower blocks of New Sarajevo, surrounded by piles of rubbish, led to the burnt-out parliament building, the Holiday Inn, and the dense older streets of central Sarajevo.

The first big surprise of the day was the absence of headscarves. Throughout the war Serb television portrayed Sarajevo as a city in the grip of Islamic fundamentalism, where women were subject to a rigid dress code. Borka and Mira only spotted a handful of scarves around the mosques in the old town.

The second shock was the old town's Orthodox church. It was still there, with its medieval icons intact. "We thought it had

been burnt down," Borka said. "The mosques and the Catholic churches on our territory have all been destroyed."

After a quarter of an hour in the church, the two girls strolled round the shops in the city centre, noticeably better stocked since the lifting of the siege than their counterparts on the Serb side.

In the Imperial Cafe on Marshal Tito Street they ordered chocolate cake and espresso coffees, and assessed developments in Sarajevo fashion.

Mira pulled out an old address book and dialled one of her former best friends, a Muslim. "Hey it's me! Mira! ... Yes! ... I'm in town ... In Sarajevo, of course ... What do you say? ... Oh well, I thought I'd just ring to say hello."

From the way Mira's smile faded it was clear her Muslim friend was less than overjoyed to hear from her. "It was like she was talking about business," she said.

Borka faced a similar disappointment at her aunt's flat in a run-down apartment block. After the initial surprise, the bearhugs and kisses, there was little option but to sit down and talk about the war. The atmosphere cooled rapidly.

"You can come to see us but I don't want to see anyone of your father's generation," Borka's aunt said.

"This is all the fault of the Serbs and the SDS [the Bosnian Serb nationalists]," Borka smiled and said she did not want to talk about politics. "She used to be my favourite aunt," she said later. "But she has changed. She has hardened. It's all the propaganda."

The drive home was virtually silent. Mira had been depressed since the telephone call at the Imperial Cafe, and only relaxed once she was back on Serb territory.

Both girls plan to leave Sarajevo once the Serb suburbs are transferred to government control on Saturday. Their day out had not changed their minds. "I will take at least five years before we can live together again," Borka said. But the next day they were on the phone again, planning their next Sarajevo outing.

News in brief

Jet crashes into houses

A Navy F-14 fighter jet crashed into a residential Nashville neighbourhood in Tennessee yesterday, killing at least five people and setting three houses on fire.

The mayor of Nashville, Phil Bredesen, said both of the crewmen on board and at least three people on the ground died. — Reuters.

Mine victims

Two British men, Anthony Michael Jones and David Peacock, were killed in a landmine accident in a remote part of northern Angola earlier this month. Foreign Office officials confirmed yesterday. Victoria Brittain writes.

Arms cache secret

The US ambassador, Swane Hunt, yesterday handed over to the Austrian government one of the best kept secrets of both countries: the location of 79 arms caches the Americans set up in Austria in the early 1950s. — AP.

'Suicide' clue

The body of a woman was found in Oakland County, Michigan, yesterday in a Volkswagen belonging to the right-to-die activist, Dr Jack Kevojian. — Reuters.

Mexico accord

John Major and President Ernesto Zedillo of Mexico agreed yesterday to work for greater Mexican access to European Union markets while the Mexican president said he would seek to encourage more British investment in his country. Ian Black writes.

£9m rescue plan for French daily

Alex Duval Smith in Paris

IN A last-ditch attempt to save the leftwing newspaper Liberation, its journalists are tomorrow expected to accept severe job cuts and a 20 per cent increase in the price of newsprint.

The 20-year-old daily, whose lively packaging of responsible reporting in a tabloid format has been imitated all over the world, is the latest casualty in a deepening French newspaper crisis.

After the closure of three national newspapers in as many months, staff at Liberation believe their will be next unless they accept a rescue package from the Chargeurs textiles and media group, which controls 12 per cent of the company.

But many of the paper's 380 journalists, who will decide whether to hand 65 per cent control to Chargeurs in return for a FF60 million (£9.3 million) cash injection, believe their loss of control will be too great.

One said: "It is the price of survival, so we do not have much choice. But in France, we are very suspicious of industrialists taking controlling interests in newspapers."

The rescue package, which is expected to lead to 78 job losses, includes £2.2 million to compensate shareholding staff for their loss of control; this will be cut from 45.2 per cent to 20 per cent.

The rescue comes after a two-year struggle against

losses of £1.9 million a month, which were partly recouped after a redesign in 1994 and 100 staff cuts last year.

Liberation is the latest casualty in a deepening European newspaper crisis caused by falling advertising revenue and a 20 per cent increase since 1994 in the price of newsprint.

French newspapers — none of which costs less than 90p — face the added constraint of a monopolistic distribution system. Earlier this month the daily InfoMatin closed after less than two years in existence. In the last quarter of 1995, two Sunday newspapers closed.

Liberation's average sales of 300,000 copies a day are low by British standards. But in France, it is weekly magazines and regional newspapers which have the largest share of the market. Apart from the hugely successful sports daily, L'Equipe, France's biggest newspaper is Ouest-France, a regional daily selling 800,000 copies in Brittany and Normandy.

According to Anne Chaussebourg, deputy editor of Le Monde, which sells 400,000 copies a day, the French press is gradually falling into the hands of large groups. "We are seeing a concentration of media ownership which is rather similar to the British and German pattern. Because the phenomenon is new, we do not have legislation to safeguard the independence of the press," she said.

Snow hinders search for mine victims

David Fairhall, Defence Correspondent

EFFORTS to recover the bodies of three British soldiers killed by a landmine in western Bosnia at the weekend were defeated yesterday by heavy snow and the hidden danger of other mines. As darkness fell army engineers had reached the wrecked vehicle but were still trying to extract it.

"There are far more mines around the vehicle than we might have imagined, both anti-tank and anti-personnel," said a spokeswoman at British sector headquarters.

The three dead soldiers were named yesterday as Trooper John Kelly, aged 21, from Sunderland, Lieutenant Richard Madden, aged 25, from Hohne, Germany, and Trooper Andrew Ovington, aged 25, from Peterlee, County Durham. All three were members of the Light Dragoons, with regimental headquarters at Newcastle upon Tyne, but normally based at Hohne.

They died in their Spartan tracked combat vehicle about 12 miles east of Tuzla Drvar, accompanied by another vehicle, as part of the Nato-led peace implementation force (I-FOR). The Spartan is lightly armoured. In this case the mine detonated ammunition inside the vehicle, which then burned out.

The incident has confirmed Nato commanders' fears that the worst danger they now face is unmarked minefields, made doubly dangerous by a covering of snow and the lack of accurate minefield maps.

There are believed to be between 3 million and 7 million unexploded mines scattered along former frontlines and in areas that may soon be revisited by tourists.

Thousands of minefield maps, of varying accuracy, have been handed over to the I-FOR commanders as required by the Dayton ac-



Gently does it... A Russian soldier defuses a mine in Pribol, north-east of Tuzla

cord. But one Nato source suggested yesterday that they probably cover only a third of the mines, most of which are anti-personnel devices.

Worldwide, mines kill or maim 500 people a week. In Geneva, diplomatic efforts are being made to strengthen the mining protocol of the United Nations inhumane weapons convention, but there is no immediate prospect of a complete ban.

Britain supports a partial ban on devices that do not self-destruct after a certain time. Meanwhile, for every mine painstakingly cleared, another 20 are laid.

John Kelly's father Dennis said yesterday: "He loved the army. It was his life. He never said he was worried. He came out of there during the war without a scratch and has gone back to be killed in

Belgrade to get EU recognition

John Palmer in Brussels

EUROPEAN Union foreign ministers said last night they were on the point of formally recognising the Yugoslav republics of Serbia and Montenegro — despite pressure from Washington to deny such rewards to the Belgrade government.

The EU overture to the Serbian president, Slobodan Milosevic, has angered the United States, human rights groups and those investigating war crimes.

The German foreign minister, Klaus Kinkel, said earlier that the issue had been put on ice because of transatlantic policy differences. He said he had received a message from the US secretary of state, Warren Christopher, restating Washington's opposition.

But later the French foreign minister, Hervé de Charette, said the text of an EU recognition declaration had been agreed, and that France would go ahead unilaterally. EU recognition is seen as a reward for President Milosevic's help in securing the Dayton peace agreement.

Last week the president of the International War Crimes Tribunal, Richard Goldstone, said he had not received "even the minimum of co-operation" from Belgrade.

After the meeting in Brussels the Italian foreign minister, Susan Agnelli, said it was hoped that recognition would come "really quite soon".

Ministers claimed they were only waiting for confirmation of a detailed mutual recognition agreement between the former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia and the Belgrade government.

"This is now the only issue that remains to be settled," the Foreign Secretary, Malcolm Rifkind, said. "There is a general view now that we should be moving towards recognition of Yugoslavia."

The main obstacle appeared to be the name by which the Macedonian state is to be known. "As I speak, [that issue] and the precise date for recognition by Belgrade are not entirely satisfactorily sorted out," European Commission official said last night.

The US fears that premature recognition might make it more difficult to secure a final mutual recognition agreement between Yugoslavia and Croatia, and could lead to repression in Kosovo.

Angry women refugees from Srebrenica, fearing for the fate of 8,000 men missing after the fall of the Muslim enclave, rampaged through Red Cross offices in Tuzla yesterday, smashing windows and equipment. At nightfall, some were still inside.

Leader comment, page 8

The trouble with John Major is that he doesn't believe in anything or look more than 48 hours ahead. I quite like him but I don't admire him. All politicians of the nineties are interested in is being in the job. That's what Margaret and Tony Blair have in common. Belief.

Lord Young G2 page 4

مكتبة الامم المتحدة

Drug abuse is rising as rebel commanders supply child soldiers, writes Cindy Shiner in Monrovia

Fighting Liberia's other war

COLONEL Abraham Kromah is fighting his own private war in Liberia's six-year civil conflict. His enemy is the drugs ravaging the country's youth, a scourge he believes led to the death of his 14-year-old brother, who was forced to join a rebel army.

"The rest [three other siblings] died at the hands of child soldiers who never knew what they were doing because they were under the influence of drugs," said Col Kromah, aged 30, deputy director of the national police and the head of Interpol in Monrovia.

He said his brother was killed in battle while on drugs provided by his commanders. Before the war broke out in December 1989, Liberia was

used as a transit point for drugs passed from south-east Asia through Nigeria. But now the country has become a drug consumer, adding another problem to poverty and civil strife.

The United Nations drug control programme is aware of the menace. It opened an office in Liberia last week.

"Today it's all over the place," said Edward Grant, a psychiatrist at the John F. Kennedy Memorial Hospital in Monrovia, who counsels and treats drug-addicted youths. "You can get heroin, you can get cocaine. Our national boundaries are porous now; there are no national customs officers to man the borders. Our drugs market is highly saturated."

Dr Grant said the number of hard-core drug addicts in

the capital had doubled during the war and that he had treated at least 75 youngsters for withdrawal symptoms or drug-induced psychosis.

Women resort to prostitution and young men turn to crime to support their 23-a-day habit of smoking cocaine — and heroin-laced cigarettes known as *dagobas*. Armed robbery and HIV infection have been on the rise.

"I took drugs in order that I would be brave on the front," a former rebel, Bill Gabriel, aged 27, said. "I took tablets that I didn't even know what it was. I took cocaine and heroin too. Grass was something like food to me."

Mr Gabriel ended up in a detoxification hospital and now lives in a mission run by a former Nigerian drug trafficker turned evangelist.

An informal survey by the private organisation Libertarians United Against Drug and Substance Abuse found nearly half the children aged between five and 15 living in the ghettos smoked marijuana or took harder drugs, including LSD, which used to be sold in pharmacies in the capital.

Col Kromah said his office was working with Nigeria's national drug law enforcement agency in trying to stem the flow of narcotics through Monrovia. But he feared a rise in the influx of drugs because direct flights from Nigeria had resumed on ADC airlines, dubbed here African Drugs Carrier.

Nigeria is Africa's largest trans-shipment point for hard drugs from south-east Asia, Col Kromah said his office

seized nearly \$2.5 million (£1.7 million) worth of heroin and cocaine last year — nearly all of it from Nigeria. Nigerian peacekeepers in Liberia have been implicated.

With international attention focused on Nigeria, some drug traffickers have found it easier to use Monrovia and neighbouring Freetown, in Sierra Leone, as points of export. They can easily buy a Liberian passport, and pass through United States customs with less scrutiny. The drug traffickers also employ as couriers Liberians made desperate by the war.

"We are quite aware of these problems, but just how much we are able to do about it depends on our resource capacity," said Joseph Jallah, who heads Liberia's national interministerial drug committee, sponsored by the UN drug control programme. It trained 10 officers for Liberia and supplied computers and a vehicle, along with other material.

The only other vehicle available belongs to Col Kromah, whose team of 37 sorely lacks resources. Col Kromah earns only \$2 a month, and he and his fellow officers have not been paid since September.

Fighting the drug trade has never been a priority for Liberia's governments. An interim administration signed international conventions on drug trafficking last year. Mr Jallah said he hoped to toughen legislation against drug traffickers.

Unless more is done, he said, "for upcoming generations, the future is bleak".

SA gunmen massacre job-seekers

AT LEAST eight people were killed in South Africa yesterday in a savage attack on a group of unemployed workers which brought back chilling memories of the random killing before majority rule.

Gunmen with rifles and pistols opened fire on more than 2,000 people queuing overnight for 200 jobs at a die-casting factory at Alberton, in the industrial belt east of Johannesburg. The attack took place shortly before 3am.

Police said they had been given conflicting accounts by survivors of what had happened. By one account about seven men pushed their way to the front of the queue and, when protests ensued, produced their guns and sprayed the crowd with bullets.

A survivor, Buthelezi Mntshelwa, wounded in the chest, told reporters that he had no idea why he had been shot.

"I was looking for a job, but I am not going to go back to that place again," he said from his hospital bed.

The factory, N.F. Die Casting, is owned by the giant Anglo American Corporation. The two main trade unions at the plant are linked to rival political groups — the ruling African National Congress and the Inkatha Freedom Party. But the management said there was no evidence of inter-union tension which might explain the killings.

The national police commissioner, George Fiwaz, and the minister of safety and security, Sydney Mufamadi, rushed to the scene and announced a reward of R250,000 (£47,000) for information leading to the killers.

The ANC said the attack could have been aimed at undermining peace efforts in KwaZulu-Natal province, at the other end of the country, where a power struggle continues between the ANC and Inkatha. It said the massacre bore "the hallmarks of a 'third force' operating in the region of our people."

The Inkatha Youth Brigade appealed to the public to leave the matter to the police and not to seek revenge.

Random attacks, which became familiar in this region of South Africa in the early 1990s — usually on trains or commuter taxis — tailed off after the non-racial elections in 1994. This encouraged speculation that they had been part of a conspiracy involving elements of the security forces, aimed at destabilising the country and stalling progress towards majority rule.

The government is concerned however, that such a force may still be operating, particularly in KwaZulu-Natal.

The suspicion has been increased by evidence of police involvement in a particularly horrific massacre at Shobashobane, near Fort Shepstone, on Christmas Day in which 19 people were hacked to death.

Mr Fiwaz said yesterday

'It bore the hallmarks of a third force operating in our midst'

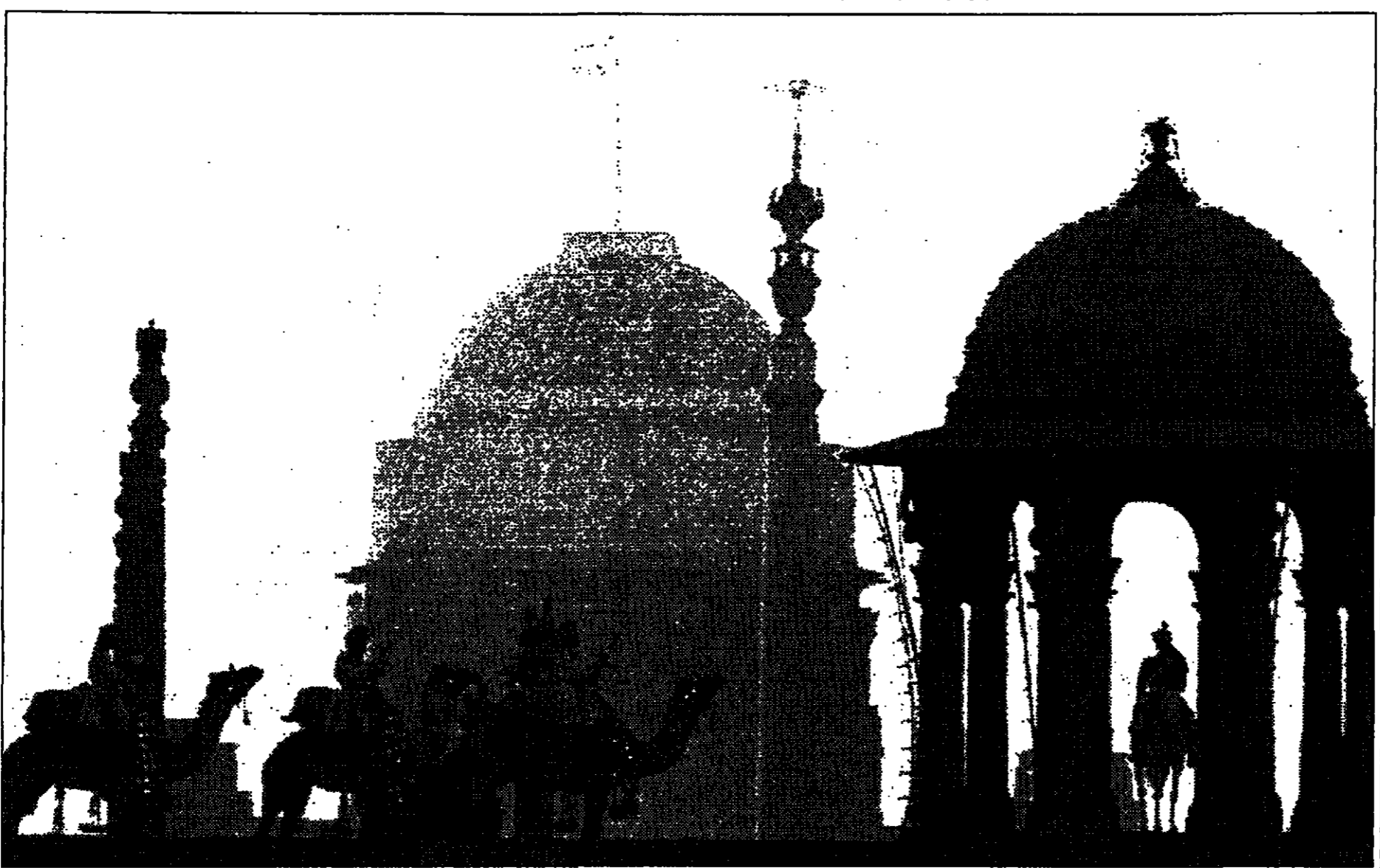
that investigation had linked at least 10 policemen to the Shobashobane incident and their arrest was imminent. More than 1,000 Zulus were involved in the attack.

The police seem to have had intelligence that it was being planned, but did nothing to prevent it.

● The general strike in Swaziland which threatened the rule of the country's absolute monarch, King Mswati III, eased yesterday as thousands of people returned to work in the towns. But the protest seemed to be holding among workers on sugar estates and timber plantations.

The return to work appeared to have been motivated in part by the fact that many employees were anxious to get their end-of-month salaries this week — raising the possibility that the strike may be resumed if the political crisis is not resolved.

Union leaders had been insisting that the action would continue until the king lifted the 1978 state of emergency and the ban on political parties.



Homeward bound... The Ganga Risala Camel Corps performs the annual beating the retreat ceremony in front of the Presidential Palace, New Delhi, yesterday

Campaign opens with Keating in the rough

It is too early to write off trailing Labour, writes Christopher Zinn in Sydney

THE chances of the prime minister, Paul Keating, leading the Australian Labour Party to its sixth term in office looked poor as the election campaign began yesterday with the latest polls taking the conservative opposition's lead to 14 points.

The Liberal-National Party coalition needs only a 0.5 per cent swing on March 2 to take seven seats from Labour and unseat the party after 13 years in power.

The Labour Party holds 79 seats in the federal parliament, the coalition 86 and independents two. Under the preferential electoral system, the first party to win 75 seats forms a government.

Mr Keating, aged 52, dismisses opinion poll results, saying a good leader does not have to be popular. But he has slipped further behind the opposition leader, John Howard, during the past year.

"There's still a long way to go," a cautious Mr Howard told supporters in Sydney yesterday. "Don't be mesmerised or seduced by volatile opinion polls on day one."

Yesterday's polls show that Labour's support has fallen to 38 per cent, compared to the coalition's 50 per cent. Betting shops are giving heavy odds against a Labour win.

Mr Keating began his campaign in Melbourne by announcing a £100 million four-year programme to combat high youth unemployment, homelessness and drug addiction. He promised to cut the unemployment rate, as high as 30 per cent in some areas, to 5 per cent by the year 2000.

Mr Howard promised to help small businesses improve job prospects for the young.

Last week the prime minister announced a package of environmental measures. The environment, economic management, unemployment, labour relations and health care are emerging as the key issues.

Labour's first television commercials have tried to paint Mr Howard as a weak far-right monarchist bent on new policies who wants to turn the clock back. Mr Howard, aged 56, was dropped as

News in brief

Greece threatens Turkey over disputed isle

TENSION between the feuding Nato neighbours Greece and Turkey rose sharply yesterday when Athens warned Ankara it would use all its military might to "protect" a disputed island in the Aegean Sea, writes Helena Smith in Athens.

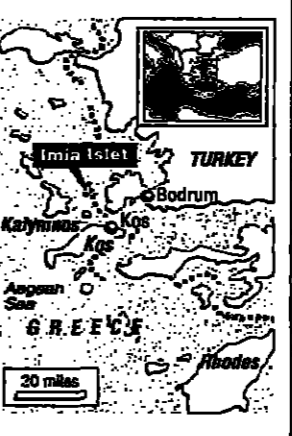
The Greek prime minister, Costas Simitis, speaking shortly before outlining his new government's policies in parliament, said Greece was determined to hold on to Imia, an uninhabited rock hugging the Turkish coastline.

"We have the means, and we will use them without any

hesitation," Mr Simitis said. "We will never accept the questioning of our national territorial rights."

Athens sent several gunboats to the border area after the two sides stepped up a flag war at the weekend, removing each other's national symbols from the islet.

Yesterday, Turkey's caretaker prime minister, Tansu Ciller, ordered the lodging of an official *démarche* with Athens after Greece — which says it acquired the island from Italy after the second world war — issued protest notes to Washington, Moscow and its European Union partners.



Armed forces' gay float under fire from old soldiers

AUSTRALIA'S defence force is under fire from army veterans for allowing homosexual personnel to enter a float in Sydney's gay and lesbian *marsh* *gras*, which attracts entrants from around the world.

Major-General "Digger" James, president of the Returned Servicemen's League (RSL) — the Australian equivalent of the British Legion — called the decision "astounding and quite wrong".

But defence force spokesmen said approval had

been given in line with official policy not to discriminate against personnel because of their sexual preferences.

Homosexuals have been allowed in the Australian armed forces since 1992.

The parade, on March 2, will feature a defence force float for the first time. It will be manned by the G-Force, a support group for gays and lesbians in the armed services.

G-Force members will not be allowed to wear uniforms or brandish military hardware or mock versions of military hardware. But they are reportedly going

to play dance music, including one melody called *Shoot Me With Your Love*.

While the organisers have welcomed the soldiers, sailors and air force entrants, the powerful RSL is far from amused. Gen James said the float gave the wrong message.

He said that, given the serious nature of recent defence cuts, personnel should be working to restore morale and funding levels and not taking part in "hoop-la or carnivals".

"I see it really as defence force bosses proselytising on behalf of a sectional group."

US eyes on first mail-in election

AMERICA'S first statewide federal postal election closes in Oregon today when voters post their last ballots in a senate contest to replace the disgraced Republican senator Bob Packwood, writes Christopher Zinn in Los Angeles.

As well as changing campaign styles, the postal vote is regarded as a guide to Democratic hopes in November's national elections. Although the new ballot process makes it difficult to gauge public opinion, the Democrat candidate, the liberal congressman Ron Wyden, does not have any measurable lead.

His Republican opponent Gordon Smith, a multi-millionaire businessman, has spent \$2 million of his own money in a blitz of aggressive television ads.

As a referendum on Speaker Newt Gingrich's rightwing "revolution", the Democrats need a decisive victory.

Oregonians regard their Pacific north-west state as an environmental paradise. But unemployment is high in the logging industry, wages are low, and Democrat loyalists may not rally to a candidate who himself advocates cuts in health care.

Fear for hostages grows

THE Indonesian military is becoming increasingly concerned because the Free Papua Movement (OPM) rebels holding 13 hostages, including four Britons, in Irian Jaya — the Indonesian half of New Guinea — have not made radio contact for five days, writes John Agillon by Jakarta.

There has been no communication with the rebel camp since Christian missionary mediators visited the OPM leader, Kelly Kwalik, last Thursday at his base near the mountainous village of Mampunda. Sources close to the negotiators fear that the Free Papua Movement may now be trying to spirit their captives across the border into Papua New Guinea, which will involve an arduous trek through 175 miles of uncharted mountainous jungle.

The hostages, who were seized on January 8 while carrying out scientific research in the Mamberi Valley, began their third week of captivity yesterday.

Thirteen hostages have already been freed.

Mr Delmonte, aged 42, a car sales executive in Sao Paulo and part-time explorer, said they hoped to raise the \$130,000 needed for the expedition from sponsors.

Since Fawcett's son Jack and a friend, Raleigh Rimmell, disappeared in 1925, mystery has surrounded his fate. In the 1930s missionaries and explorers reported sightings of Fawcett living among the Amerindians, but these were never confirmed.

In 1987 an American missionary wrote to Fawcett's wife to say that she had seen a fair-haired Amerindian child in the region, the fruit of Jack's liaison with an Amerindian woman. But another Fawcett son, Brian, who went on an expedition to search for his father in 1952, said the fair-haired Amerindian was an albino.

Orlando Villas Boas, one of the three legendary brothers who led expeditions to contact indigenous groups in central Brazil in the 1950s, before the roads arrived, and who set up the Xingu National Park where many of them now live, has always maintained a keen interest in the fate of Col Fawcett.

In 1951 he found a funeral urn containing human bones in a Xingu

Hunt for clues to explorer's death

Brazilian expedition hopes to solve 71 year-old Fawcett puzzle, Jan Rocha in Sao Paulo writes

AN EXPEDITION is being planned to discover what happened to the British explorer, the British explorer who disappeared in the Brazilian jungle 71 years ago while allegedly seeking a lost city.

The Brazilian-born organisers, James Lynch and Renato Delmonte, intend to use Land Rovers and boats to retrace the explorer's route into the Xingu region of central Brazil. They plan to set out in June from the Mato Grosso town of Cuiaba and travel more than 1,500 miles, following the co-ordinates given by Fawcett in his last message in 1925.

Mr Delmonte, aged 42, a car sales executive in Sao Paulo and part-time explorer, said they hoped to raise the \$130,000 needed for the expedition from sponsors.

Since Fawcett's son Jack and a friend, Raleigh Rimmell, disappeared in 1925, mystery has surrounded his fate. In the 1930s missionaries and explorers reported sightings of Fawcett living among the Amerindians, but these were never confirmed.

In 1987 an American missionary wrote to Fawcett's wife to say that she had seen a fair-haired Amerindian child in the region, the fruit of Jack's liaison with an Amerindian woman. But another Fawcett son, Brian, who went on an expedition to search for his father in 1952, said the fair-haired Amerindian was an albino.

Orlando Villas Boas, one of the three legendary brothers who led expeditions to contact indigenous groups in central Brazil in the 1950s, before the roads arrived, and who set up the Xingu National Park where many of them now live, has always maintained a keen interest in the fate of Col Fawcett.

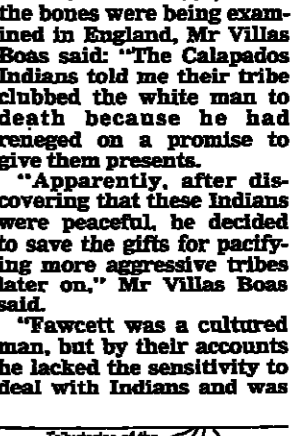
In 1951 he found a funeral urn containing human bones in a Xingu

village. They were examined years later in London, but were declared not to be Fawcett's. There are now moves afoot to subject the bones, which are currently stored at the Sao Paulo Anthropological Museum, to DNA testing.

In the late 1980s, when the bones were being examined in England, Mr Villas Boas said: "The Calapados Indians told me their tribe had buried the white man to avenge a curse he had reneged on a promise to give them presents."

"Apparently, after discovering that these Indians were peaceful, he decided to save the gifts for pacifying more aggressive tribes on," Mr Villas Boas said.

"Fawcett was a cultured man, but by their accounts he lacked the sensitivity to deal with Indians and was



sharp with their children, pushing them away and scolding them when they played with his baggage."

Mr Villas Boas believes that Fawcett was really seeking minerals, not a lost city. He says he was told by Kalapalo Amerindians exactly how Fawcett had met his death. They said the explorer was killed with a blow to the neck while he stood on a river bank, and then thrown into a lake, after he antagonised the Amerindians in the village where he was staying.

Jack Fawcett and Rimmell were killed when they went to his rescue, according to this account.

The expedition's organisers will invite Mr Villas Boas, now in his 70s, to go with them. They also want to recruit doctors, mechanics and journalists.

grade to get recognition

John Major is that he doesn't like or look more than 48 hours in the nineties are interested in. That's what Margaret and I common. Belief.

Wrong arm of the law

Education, not legislation, is the way to cut crime

MICHAEL Howard is angry with Labour for opposing Conservative criminal justice policies. And so is the Prime Minister. But why? The person who has done more to tear up Conservative law and order policies is not Tony Blair — nor Jack Straw — but Michael Howard himself. It was Michael Howard, not Labour, who reversed the bipartisan policies painstakingly put together by a succession of Conservative Home Secretaries.

six years at the current rate. The serious speech on crime yesterday was delivered not by the Prime Minister but by the Leader of the Opposition. The roots of crime, as the Government's own researchers noted earlier this month, are deep and directly connected to the economic and social conditions of the country. In his speech celebrating the tenth anniversary of Faith in the City, the report of the Archbishop of Canterbury's Special Commission on Urban Priority Areas, Tony Blair was right to repeat his earlier warnings and set out how the social and economic inequalities of a decade ago have widened. Crime is not solved by criminal justice Acts but, as Faith in the City argued, by an across-the-board push on unemployment, housing, education, community development and crime. All are important but Mr Blair was right to spend most time on education, the crucial ladder for people wanting to escape from inner city deprivation. His readiness to explore new incentive schemes to get the best graduates to teach in the worst inner city schools should be encouraged. Idealism is not dead, as the Americans have demonstrated through a variety of teaching schemes.

How to catch a war criminal

Nato governments must give greater backing to the Tribunal

RIGHTLY, the United States is trying to deter the European Union countries from normalising relations with Belgrade. Diplomatic recognition of the rump Federation of Serbia and Montenegro would be a significant step towards the restoration of international legitimacy to President Milosevic. But even though EU Foreign Ministers yesterday decided to postpone recognition, their timing now depends on normalisation between Belgrade and Macedonia, and will go ahead notwithstanding US reservations. This is a false tactic. Recognition would deprive Nato countries of a valuable lever to secure compliance by Belgrade with the Dayton agreement's provisions for the pursuit of war criminals. It would also make it virtually impossible to indict Mr Milosevic himself for war crimes.

and that includes those who endorsed atrocities without physical participation. Yet the Nato allies also need Milosevic and Tudjman in the implementation of the Dayton agreement, where war crimes are only one aspect of a much broader whole. The Nato military are also frustrating Judge Goldstone's task. His investigators are receiving little help in their attempts to prevent the grisly evidence of mass graves from being destroyed before the full facts can be established. The military commanders are even more opposed to involvement in the arrest of suspects. They assert that I-FOR's identification with the War Crimes Tribunal would be courting reprisals and unnecessary danger for their soldiers. The commanders must be overruled. The War Crimes process is too important to be thwarted. Nato governments must give more decisive backing to Judge Goldstone. It is as wrong now as it was in 1945 to contend that scarce resources are better devoted to rebuilding shattered countries than to raking over the past. After 1945, war crimes trials and the exposure of individual mass murderers were vital to the healing process in Europe. The same applies to Bosnia, and to Croatia, today. The International Tribunal is as much part of future peace in former Yugoslavia as Nato's I-FOR and the civilian task force under Carl Bildt. The International Tribunal deserves the support of all who profess to seek peace and stability in the Balkans.

Responding in the vernacular

Stray thoughts of a Yorkshire Conservative candidate

FORMER Chancellor Norman Lamont, newly adopted as prospective Conservative candidate for Harrogate, yesterday dismissed allegations that he might be ousted by a grassroots revolt because he was not a local man. "Both intellectually and, if I may say so, spiritually, I have long considered myself a Yorkshireman, you daft hap'porth," he told a reporter.

like Heseltine, sithee." The former Chancellor, who during the interview unbuttoned his jacket to reveal a silk t-shirt inscribed Boycott For Pope, was asked if he thought Mr Major was likely to be replaced after the next election. He said he was "too topfull o'through" to waste his time on such speculation. Probed about his own leadership ambitions, Mr Lamont replied: "I've never thowt owt o' that, you girt bugger." But suppose — reporters persisted — John Major were to resign after the next election, and the party's right wingers proved hopelessly torn between Michael Portillo and John Redwood: could the former Chancellor yet emerge, faute de mieux as it were, as a dark horse candidate? Downing his pint of Tetley's in a single gulp, Mr Lamont unbuttoned his jacket, placed his cap on his head, fastened the lead on his whipper, and smiled an inscrutable smile. "Happen" he said.



Letters to the Editor

That Blair agenda (cont.)

JOHN GRAY calls for "bold policies" from Labour to "forge a new political settlement" (Putting Britain together again, January 29). Yet it seems that the extent of his radical vision is the introduction of PR and tinkering with NHS-funding machinery — and this without Tony Blair's excuse of being burdened by the "art of the possible" culture of political reality.

BOTH Tony Blair (Battle for Britain, January 29) and John Gray bemoan the loss of a collective value by which our lives can be governed. Both affirm the need to bring forth the "much tighter formulations". Most of it appeared to be generated by his own colleagues in the shadow cabinet creating the opportunity for the other side. Is this the model for the future? Will the Trojan horse(s) have to be wheeled forward by the Trojans? Terry Hamilton, 23 Cavendish Crescent South, Nottingham NG7 1ED.

YOUR leader (January 29) is right to press the Labour leader to stay on course, but there's a worrying side to your point about the pressure that was necessary to bring forth the "much tighter formulations". Most of it appeared to be generated by his own colleagues in the shadow cabinet creating the opportunity for the other side. Is this the model for the future? Will the Trojan horse(s) have to be wheeled forward by the Trojans? Terry Hamilton, 23 Cavendish Crescent South, Nottingham NG7 1ED.

Northern Ireland: why elections could spell a Major disaster

THE dismay with which republicans and the Irish government view John Major's call for elections in Northern Ireland should be shared whatever one's political sympathies. (Ulster scramble moves to US, January 27). Major must hope to benefit from the widespread view that democracy and elections must be synonymous. This is wrong, and especially so in the tricky case of political transitions.

Some 20 years ago, as director of the Northern Ireland Community Relations Commission, I went with a group of prominent members of the community to meet the self-appointed Workers' Council. It was beginning a protest strike against what it saw as an attempt by the new power-sharing executive to railroad Ulster into a united Ireland. So alarmed were we by the potential damage to the emergent executive that we tried to see the newly appointed Secretary of State at Stormont, Merlyn Rees. We were met by a senior official of the Northern Ireland Office who informed us that Merlyn Rees would have no truck with "thugs and bully boys". We sent a delegation to Westminster: the chief Labour spokesman on Northern Ireland refused even to listen to what we had to say. The rest is history. The strike became a province-wide shutdown and the executive fell. And now John Major has done it again. He has managed to antagonise not just Sinn Féin but the entire nationalist community and the Irish government. Having appointed a commission which came up with a formula to save faces all round, why did he not accept it? And why has he failed to consult? David Rowlands, Heworth, York YO3.

I must have been out of the country when "the class culture of deference was destroyed". Margaret Thatcher may have encouraged a kind of bullying meritocracy, a tilting at the windmills of privilege by Essex Man, but she left the fundamental institutions of class to continue their malign business. The Labour Party could begin the process of democratic renewal by root-and-branch constitutional reform. PAs for the disreputable rogues inhabiting the royal palace and the arm-in-sleeve zombies of "the Upper House", a rebalancing of power in favour of the local and regional level, a Freedom of Information Act, the recovery of the national assets stolen under the name of privatisation. Oh yes, and proportional representation. Chris Wilkins, 13 West Street, Leicester LE1 6XL.

Effective political action is shelved, leaving us with Labour's petty preoccupations about community. The "big idea" retreats from the fundamentals to tertiary sectors of society, like education or training. Such low expectations dimish politics. Bruno Waterfield, 135 Isleford Road, London N7 7JP.

ANYONE who has observed the increasingly ridiculous and ideologically bereft transformation of New Labour can only conclude that it stands for an almost perfect fusion of Thatcherism and social democracy: a free-market economy fettered only by a layer of quangos stuffed with Labour appointees. I find laughable the notion that Tony Blair's ill-thought-out gimmick, the "stakeholder society", should be seen as anything other than a typical piece of social-democratic centralising and unspecified waffle. (C) Tina Farron, 11B Preston Road, Leyland, Lancashire PR5 2NT.

Austere regimes

OUR family wishes to express our satisfaction with the verdict of the inquest on what led to Shiji Lapite's death in the early hours of December 17 1994 (Asylum seeker unlawfully killed by police, January 26), and our profound gratitude for the moral and financial help we have received. Shiji's death is an example of the difficulties which have been facing Nigerians over the past 12 years. Thousands from the productive sector have been arbitrarily imprisoned and murdered by the Nigerian military junta, driven insane and forced into seeking asylum in various countries. Nigeria earns over \$2 million a day in oil exports, yet the economy is in shambles and the infrastructure is in state of decay. Oil revenue is plundered by the military rulers, who revel in their ill-gotten gains while turning deaf ears to the plight of the masses. We will, however, continue to fight the good fight with the hope that a solution will be found to the problems which prevail there. Shiji Lapite, Medlar Street, London SE5.



Bypassing the bypass (again)

IT seems that Newbury MP (David Randle) is not totally familiar with the present-day geography of Newbury (Letters, January 19). Some 50,000 vehicles do not trundle through the middle of our lovely old market town every day. Thousands of juggernauts do not thunder past Marks & Spencer's or McDonalds: they pass by on the Newbury bypass. Newbury has had a bypass for the last 30 years. It is true that the Newbury Bypass Mark One has become overburdened with traffic, but for some very strange reason, this was not

taken into consideration a few years ago, when planning permission was granted for a superstore and attendant car parks alongside this already busy road. Many wise Newburyans predicted that horrendous traffic congestion would follow in the wake of this large commercial development. Will the second Newbury bypass be the last Newbury bypass? Rosemarie Johnson, Sarham, Andover Drive, Washwater, Newbury, Berkshire RG15 0LZ.

Major might retort that he is calling for elections only for party representatives to a negotiating forum, and that parties should have legitimate themselves internally before going to the table. Yet elections would inevitably set parties at odds among themselves. The electoral battle and posturing of "normal" democracy have no place in the process of political transition where co-operation between parties is at a premium. (Dr) Melissa Lane, King's College, Cambridge CB3 1ST.

IT IS not often that I agree with John Major, but after 17 months of pettiness and stalling over the Northern Ireland peace process, I feel that all the main participants should be required to review their electoral mandate prior to all-party talks. Major's govern-

In America, power comes cheap

THE Electricity Association defends astoundingly high electricity prices in Britain by claiming that, by comparison, one American company charges nearly 17 pence per kilowatt-hour (Letters, January 25). In fact, this single American company (out of one thousand) charges 17 cents — not pence — that is, about 1p, near the British average. The average American domestic customer pays only 5p. Someone should inform the highly compensated new captains of your electricity in-

dustry that, in America, we use a different currency, the "dollar", which is tinted green. Gregory Palast, Union Associates, 64 Second Avenue, New York, NY 10003 USA. Please include a full postal address, even an e-mailed address, and a daytime telephone number. We may edit letters: shorter ones are more likely to appear. We regret we cannot acknowledge those not used.

The merry vibes of Windsor

PRINCE Charles's call to celebrate the approaching new millennium is inspirational (Make it a matter of the spirit, January 25). He is in effect asking us to see it as an opportunity to reconsider the basic assumptions of the materialist world view that has prevailed in the latter part of the present millennium. One such assumption is that all benefits are man-made — the product of science, technology and industry, ie of economic development or progress, and made available via the market or by state institutions. For politicians and economists who have been trained in these ideas, no value of any kind is attributed to the invaluable, irreplaceable services provided for free by the natural functioning of normal human families and communities. Until recently, these included the production of food and artefacts, the maintenance of law and order and even much of the business of government itself. Nor is any value attributed to the equally invaluable and irreplaceable

benefits, also provided for free, of the normal functioning of ecological systems — benefits that they are alone capable of assuring on anything but an insignificant scale: the fertility of our soil, the replenishment of our water supplies and the stability of our climate. If no value is attributed to these critical benefits, none can be attributed either to the families, the communities or the ecological systems that provide them, and which must clearly constitute our real wealth. It follows that we can annihilate them, as we are systematically doing today, with impunity. Clearly a society that entertains such a dogma must be incapable of solving the ever more pressing problems of today. It must thus be a priority to reconsider it seriously as it must be the other equally untenable assumptions that underlie the aberrant world view with which we have all been imbued. Edward Goldsmith, The Ecologist, 32-34 Paradise Road, Richmond, Surrey TW9 1SE.

drop a tail once. After each combing he flattens the end with a wooden bat. Original hoists operate between floors of the mill, but if you need more evidence that this industry really is labour-intensive, you must climb three flights of wooden stairs to where someone sits at a table teasing out individual hairs by hand from a white tail to pure white. Children used to be employed to separate lustrous, delicately patterned single hairs to feed into the looms, but when, in 1870, the law sent them to school, the shrewd industrialist invented the "John Boyd Picker", which mechanically takes up the hairs one by one. It was extraordinary to watch his original "pickers" (all repairs done and replacement parts made, necessarily, in house) still picking away so effectively as to produce fabrics that have just won "Best Product" prize at the "Decorer" exhibition. Downstairs again, the finished fabric is flattened by a familiar Somerset cider-press. JOHN VALLANS

A Country Diary

SOMERSET. Almost the substantial houses of Castle Cary stands an arch with an inscription carved in stone: "John Boyd 1837", and if you trace the course of the River Cary, you come to a range of three-storey mill buildings, once powered by a great water-wheel where I was shown John Boyd's original looms of 1872 (now electrically-powered) clattering busily in 1986 to produce a lustrous, delicately patterned furnishing fabric from horse-hair. Some of the fabric is identical to that used by Hoplewhite. Lutyens employed Boyd fabrics, and now there are new designs (controlled by a system of ancient wooden pegs on the loom) for modern furniture designers. John Boyd first spotted a market when everyone here rode a horse, and tails were regularly cropped. Suppliers that washed them in the town pond. Now tails come from China, and in a small room downstairs, a man takes each tail and draws it through a metal comb. This is called "hacking". He says you only

صلى الله عليه وسلم

Diary

Matthew Norman

GENTLEMAN Charlie Wilson, the fey Glaswegian acting editor of the Independent, is fabled for his love of high culture. So it was no surprise to find yesterday's back page devoted to a row in the world of opera...

Far-sighted view from the tripod

Commentary Hugo Young

THE MOST awe-inspiring political figure I've met this year goes by the name of Ballin. At a time when party leaders are hyping their sincerity machines into overdrive...

argument. Like Simeon Stylites, the 5th century saint who lived on a pillar, he sends only a signal against the decadence of certain forms of modernity. And, as is usually the fate of such uncomfortable prophets, he provoked uncontrollable rage.

of the roads lobby. This is a transformation brought about entirely by protest, and as such has put most mainstream politicians to shame.

road that, the philosophy of road-building has gone the same way as the economic certainties that once seemed to make it incontestable. This has been registered in speeches by the Environment Secretary, John Gummer. It is underlined by the shift in academic analysis, again quietly supported by ministers who want to save money, towards the idea that car-roads might be costed, controlled, deterred and prevented, rather than indulged.

environmental protection, which we now dutifully recognise as speaking a more durable truth, nothing seems able to stop the immediate ascendancy of might over right.

Oh, to be in Turkey, now Sarah's there



Catherine Bennett

SARAH COOK'S decision to exchange the charms of Newbury for a political commitment. All the same, for an object failure over the by-pass nothing exceeds the odium that should be heaped on the Liberal Democrats.

young Briton most want to after exhausting the delights of our pubs and supermarkets, the lottery and the soaps? To buy a holiday in Turkey, a time-share in the Algarve, or a retirement home in Marbella, Miss Cook has merely taken the waiting out of wanting.

What's happening at Newbury is the acting-out of time-warp politics

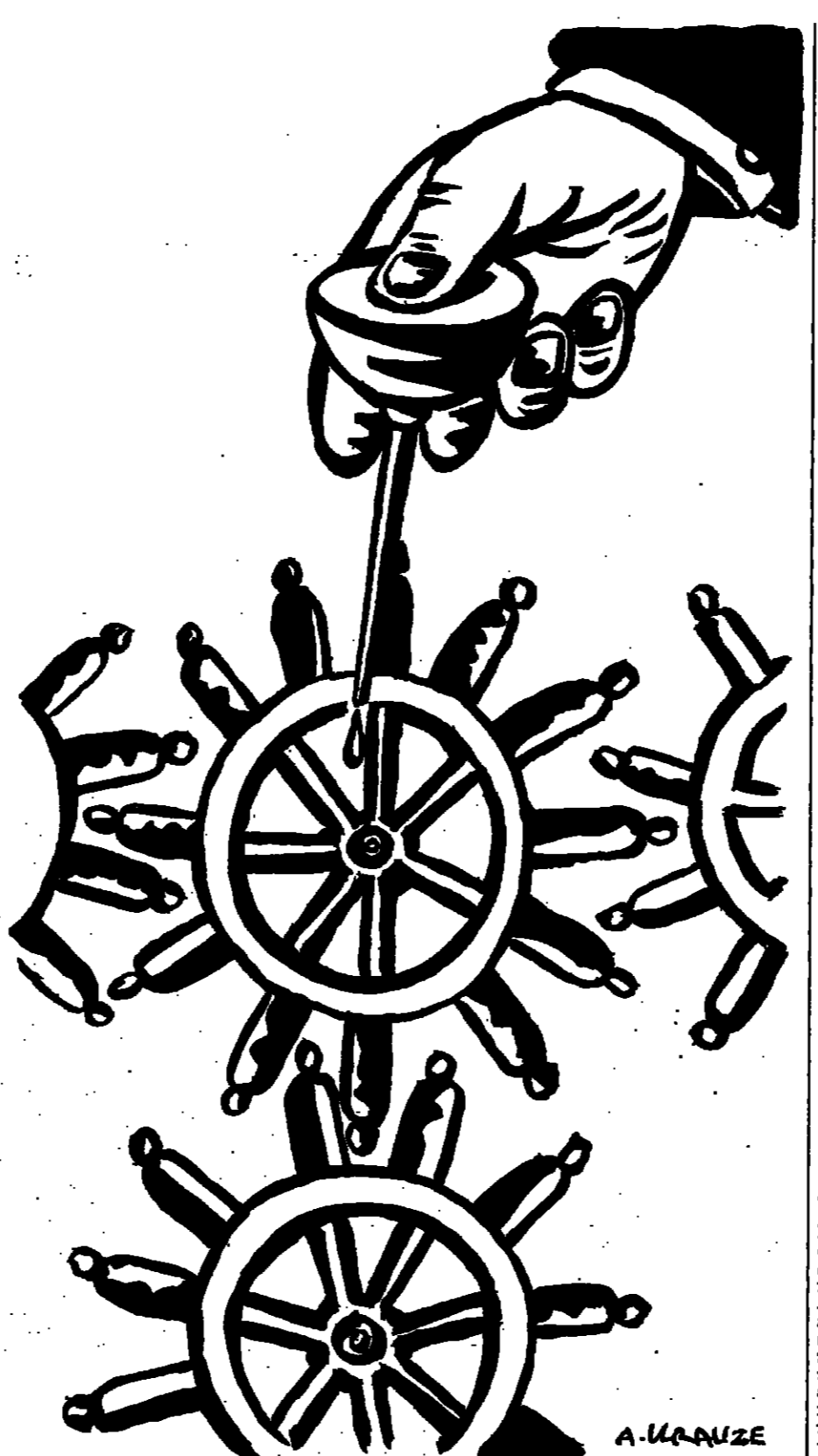
nised for environmental impact assessments. Alternative schemes, built around traffic control rather than demand, were at a less sophisticated stage of evolution.

Here was an opportunity for the Liberal Democrats to carve out a different path: to apply their general principle to a particular situation they are in a position to influence.

Geoff Mulgan fleshes out Tony Blair's plans for a new Britain, but insists that without a tax-funded right to work, the rhetoric of 'inclusion' is mere empty words

A high-stake society

WITH YESTERDAY'S speech to mark the 10th anniversary of Faith In The City, Tony Blair has continued his remarkable journey of reinventing the Labour Party.



need to be funded by a special tax. There is no alternative to it, since for most people a job is a far more important symbol of citizenship than a vote or constitutional rights.

BURSTING through that tiresome actorly stereotype is my friend Richard E Grant, whose diary (with the entitled With Nails) is serialised this week in the Daily Express.

But it is in work that arguments about inclusion will stand or fall. It is work more than anything that makes us feel included or excluded.

holding have in their mind a clear view of the typical company. Their model of an inclusive company is a large national one, employing many tens of thousands, and probably unionised.

course many of these are multinational firms with connections and obligations to "stakeholders" far beyond Britain.

NEW evidence suggests that much of the audience to Crime Watch, BBC's monthly feast of voyeuristic thrills, may need Dutch courage before switching on.

the ability to earn a living, the truth is that worker power has become virtually a taboo subject in British politics. One reason is the banal legacy of much of British trade unionism.

By the end of this decade, half of all private-sector employees will work in firms of fewer than 50 employees.

Labour is right to focus on "one nation" means in a radically changing social landscape. But its challenge now is to be true to its own origins and acknowledge that it is at work that inclusion counts for most.

What else has Miss

WHAT else has Miss Cook missed, Ian? The threat of power blackouts? A new scheme to teach infants about alcohol, as well as sex? Lottery roll-overs, with their repetitions of greed, despair and recrimination?



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Ruth Berghaus

Dialectics at the opera

IN DECEMBER 1981 after the premiere of a new production of The Seraglio at the Frankfurt Opera House, and amid a storm of boos and catcalls from the audience, a stage hand told me: "Later we will be able to understand what this means. She is 10 years ahead of us." He was talking about Ruth Berghaus who had directed the Mozart opera.

Berghaus, who has died aged 68, remained up to her last production — the premiere of Rolf Liebermann's Freispruch für Medea last year — ahead of her time. She never accepted the conventional way of opera making, and always took a fresh, often radical look at the well-established and the routine, which is why boos accompanied her career from her first staging of Richard Strauss's Elektra at the Berlin State Opera in 1957.

Ruth Berghaus was born in Dresden and it was there, after the war, and a brief interment, that she studied dance and choreography at Gret Palucca's school. In 1951 Palucca sent her pupils to see Bertolt Brecht's Mother Courage, an occasion which provided Berghaus's first encounter with the Berliner Ensemble. Berghaus was so impressed that she moved to Berlin to continue her training, first with Wolfgang Langhoff then at Brecht's theatre. There she met Paul Dessau, Brecht's composer, and they married in 1954. Palucca, Brecht and Dessau influenced the young choreographer and it is thanks to them that in Berghaus's work dance, music and theatre were brought together in a unique unity.

She successfully transferred Brecht's techniques to opera, a task Brecht had thought impossible. And from him she learned the erzählerische arrangement — his art of creating a story on stage. She had been directing Dessau's operas, but it was when Wieland

Emotion did not have to be shown but rather experienced by the audience

Wagner died and she took on Elektra, that her career took off.

When she choreographed the battle scenes for the Berliner Ensemble's 1964 production of Coriolanus, it was her mixture of acting and dance that astounded the critics. In 1971 when Helene Weigel, Brecht's widow died, she became artistic director of Brecht's Theater am Schiffbauerdamm in Berlin. In opera and theatre one could trace her origins in dance in the way she used movement patterns, although it could attract criticism since audiences sometimes found her sign language hard to understand and missed the traditional operatic behaviour, which she refused to show.

Despite clashes with the East German authorities, who labelled her avant-gardism "unpatriotic", she remained a member of the Communist Party and was allowed to travel freely out of the eastern bloc. Her first production in the West was of Dessau's The Judgement of Lucullus, in Mainz. It was followed by Rossini's The Barber of Seville in Munich and Mozart's The Magic Flute in Frankfurt. The managers in Munich were not as courageous as Michael Gien, musical and artistic director of the Frankfurt opera, who invited her back. She returned frequently to Frankfurt, directing a repertoire from Mozart and Janacek to Berlioz and Wagner. There, thanks to Gien and his chief dramaturg Klaus Zehelein, Berghaus met designers Erich

Wunder and Axel Manthey and architect Hans Dieter Schaal. She continued to work with all three outside Frankfurt.

During her years in that city it was her productions of almost unknown pieces like Janacek's The Makropoulos Affair or Bertolt's The Trojans which were extraordinary successes while operas from the traditional repertoire by Mozart and Wagner were, especially initially, rejected by the public. But audiences did get used to her style, and her mid-eighties production of Wagner's Ring became a cult event with Berghaus and Gien given a 75-minute standing ovation after the last performance in 1987. Berghaus went on to show her unique style in Vienna, Cardiff, Hamburg, Paris and Zurich. She also returned to her origins, directing both ballets and plays.

She was often criticised for cold and emotionless productions. However she countered this by explaining that emotion did not have to be shown but rather experienced by the audience through her direction. Coming from the Brechtian school, she purposely avoided any identification with the action on stage. Her approach was analytical, never psychological. She wanted people to think about what they saw, understand connections and relate them to themselves. Yet all this did not stop her audiences from being moved by her work. Her Traviata in Stuttgart, one of her few experiences with Giuseppe Verdi, was a notable example. More was to come but the cancer which eventually killed her stopped her from exploring his work any further. Die Soldaten by Zimmermann was another opera which she had always wanted to direct but although the project was discussed in Paris, London and with me in Amsterdam it never got off the ground. It would have been perfect for her. Singers, actors and dancers loved working with her



Berghaus... always ahead of her time. PHOTOGRAPH: BRIAN TARR

because she was always well-prepared and took all her ideas right from the scores, with sometimes an unexpected directness. She never asked the impossible from a singer but she loved that special artificial constitution singers need to get into on stage. She used and transformed it into her own unique language.

The fall of the Berlin wall and the new political situation did not work to Berghaus's advantage. She always regarded herself as a faithful citizen of the German Democratic Republic despite the interlocking she suffered from the censor. As a person and an artist she was always straight-

forward and did not feel any necessity to change her political attitudes according to the new circumstances. For her, unlike many East Germans, work continued to flow in after 1989.

She remained, despite all the personal criticism, a very vulnerable person who hoped for nothing more than that audiences should understand her work. An era is at its end but we will still need some time to catch up with Ruth Berghaus's work.

Klaus Bertisch

Ruth Berghaus, choreographer and director, born July 2, 1927; died January 25, 1996

Geoffrey Pardoe

Boffin who gave Westminster a rocket

Geoffrey Pardoe, who has died of a heart attack aged 67, was a pioneer of British rocketry, a consulting engineer and, for decades, among the most articulate and critical commentators on the British government's absence of space policy. He first came to prominence as project manager of Britain's Blue Streak intermediate range ballistic missile. When Blue Streak was cancelled as a defence project, Pardoe argued for the modification of the rocket as the first stage of the European satellite launcher, Europa-1, financed as a non-military project by Britain, France, Germany, Holland and Italy through the European Launcher Development Organisation (Elido).

The Elido project was the first collaborative aerospace programme of its kind and Pardoe felt at home in it because, on top of his expertise and experience, he spoke fluent French and German. Blue Streak never failed but Europa-1 ran into repeated and costly second and third stage failures during its first series of test flights, and was neglected developments such as advanced energy systems — as of great importance to technological and national prosperity, he addressed the problem in two ways.

First he established his own

high-tech engineering and information consultancy (GTS) in the science park at Brunel University, and then sought to publicise what governments should be doing. An articulate man of great energy and cheerfulness he became the independent expert to whom the media turned for comment. At a deeper level he sought to formulate coherent policies for Britain. To many journalists and colleagues he was a mentor and friend.

Pardoe, whose sprightly step indicated natural athleticism, was trained at Loughborough College of Technology, and went into rocket design at Armstrong Whitworth, producing, among other things, the Sea Slug guided missile. Becoming a specialist in aerodynamics, he and rocket flight analysis, he took over Blue Streak in 1957. But his deepest concerns eventually lay with the maintenance of advanced industries and in the beneficial applications of technology in society. In 1966 he became chairman of the Watts Committee on Energy, an organisation concerned in the promotion of improved energy generation and use.



Pardoe... space pioneer

Pardoe argued fiercely that this trivial saving might put Britain out of spaceflight for good. Since he saw space and later other government-neglected developments such as advanced energy systems — as of great importance to technological and national prosperity, he addressed the problem in two ways.

First he established his own

Anthony Tucker

Geoffrey Pardoe, engineer, born November 2, 1928; died January 3, 1996

Ralph Yarborough

Lone star liberal

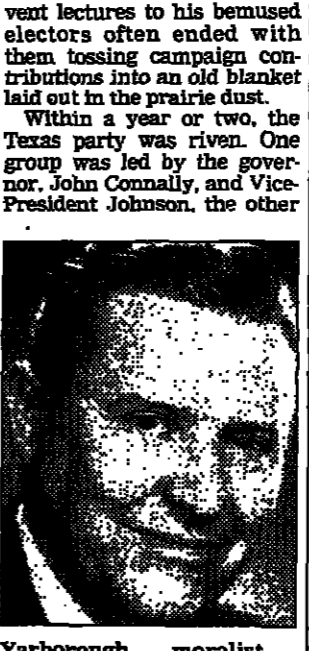
Ralph Yarborough, who has died aged 92, tried vainly to drag the Texas Democrats into the liberal mainstream of the party. He was the only southern senator to vote for President Lyndon Johnson's Civil Rights Act in 1964.

It was Senator Yarborough's divisive impact on Texan politics that caused President Kennedy to fly to Dallas in November 1963, hoping to patch things up before the coming election. The Senator was in the car following Kennedy's when the President was assassinated.

Yarborough's political career began in the fifties when the Democrats still enjoyed the unbreakable hold on the Senate. He was elected after the civil war. Some followed a fairly liberal line in national and international affairs, but their stance on black advancement was unendingly hostile.

The unpopularity of the alternative view was made quite clear to Yarborough, then a young Austin lawyer, when he defeated in gubernatorial campaigns in 1952, 1954, and 1956. But then he unexpectedly won a special senate election in 1957 when the incumbent became governor. He was soon elected full-termed support to Johnson's great society. But it could not last and they were soon at odds again over the Vietnam war, with Yarborough supporting a small country's right to self-determination and alarmed by the impact of the inflation that the conflict caused at home.

As the 1968 presidential



Yarborough... moralist

by Yarborough, President Kennedy, who had won 1950 by the slimmest margin, needed the Texas vote if he was to be re-elected.

The feud was patched up in the aftermath of the assassination, with Yarborough giving full-throated support to Johnson's great society. But it could not last and they were soon at odds again over the Vietnam war, with Yarborough supporting a small country's right to self-determination and alarmed by the impact of the inflation that the conflict caused at home.

As the 1968 presidential

campaign began, he threw his support behind the anti-war contender for the Democratic nomination, Senator Eugene McCarthy. Johnson announced in March that he would not run.

It proved a pyrrhic victory for Yarborough. By now he had become chairman of the senate labour and public welfare committee which allowed him to sponsor a wide range of legislation to assist minorities. Federal laws he shepherded on to the statute book dealt with such issues as improved health care, higher minimum wages and better job training.

But he had burned his boats in Texas and was soundly defeated in the 1970 primary contest for his senate seat, losing again in 1972. Texas had had its fill of liberals. His re-election in 1964 was the last time the state returned anyone of his stripe to national office.

Harold Jackson

Ralph Webster Yarborough, politician, born June 8, 1903; died January 27, 1996

Death Notices

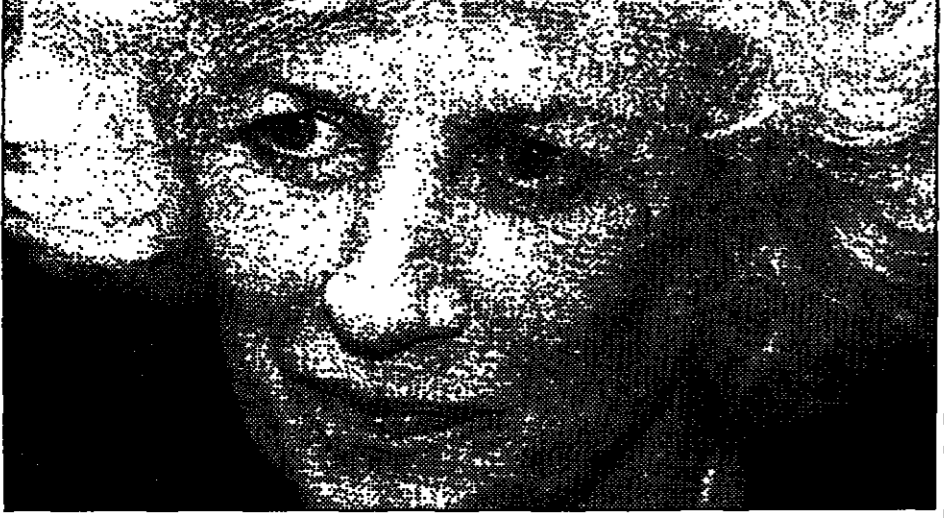
ADDY Mary Elizabeth retired school teacher of Fitzwilliam Road, Wisborough, died peacefully 27 of January 1996, aged 91. Buried in Trinity Methodist Church. No flowers. Donations for UNICEF and West Trinity Church.

BOELINCK, Max. On January 26th aged 78, after a long illness. Sadly missed by Ann, Kim, Sam, Peter, Beth and Louise who will be at the funeral on Wednesday the 31st January. No flowers. Donations for the Stoke Newington Association, CIS House, Whitcross Street, E51.

HILLMAN, Ellen Sharon, died peacefully at London Chest Hospital on 26th January 1996, aged 90. Buried in St. Luke's Church, 50th St. E. London. Family and friends invited to place your announcement telephone 0171 611 9000

In Memoriam

PROBERT, Clive, Guardian reader of Gloucestershire, Pembroke College Oxford. In life is not the same without him since his wonderful memories. He brought us to place your announcement telephone 0171 611 9000



Czech mate... Olga Havlova was always Václav Havel's partner in resistance

Olga Havlova First lady of dissent

THE Czech President Václav Havel would observe: "Olga and I are very different. I am a child of the middle class and ever the diffident intellectual. Olga is a working-class girl, very much her own person, sober, unsentimental, and she can even be somewhat mouthy and obnoxious; in other words, as we say, you can't get her drunk on a bun."

Indeed Olga Havlova, who has died of cancer aged 62, grew up in Zizkov, Prague's working-class district, and began her working life at the Bata shoe factory. Her desire to become an actress led her

into Prague's cafe society and her 1956 meeting with Václav Havel; they married eight years later.

Olga, who was Havel's first and most important critic, worked as a shop assistant and usherette, while he was in-prison playwright for the prestigious avant-garde Prague theatre Na Zbradili. In the early seventies, when Havel's works were banned, the couple moved to the country. In 1975 with fellow dissident Jan Lopatka, later editor of Letters To Olga, they formed the samizdat Edice Expedice. Everything they published anonymously but

— proved to be an intellectual life raft. Although severely constrained by the prison "library" style, the letters were copied by Olga and disseminated among fellow literati. The Letters To Olga were first published in a samizdat edition in 1983.

After Havel's release that same year harassment continued. In 1987 Olga was instrumental in founding the samizdat theatre magazine O Divadle (On Theatre). The magazine provided a platform for variations on Faust inspired by Havel's play Temptation, which first articulated the idea that with the waning away of the body politic even evil had become patetically tame and impotent. Havel's attracted contributions both from the underground and from official critics writing pseudonymously. It became one of the most respected journals in Czechoslovakia and was important, a forum where dissident and civic elements — which spontaneously ignited in the 1989 Velvet Revolution — were able to meet.

When Havel was elected president later that year, Olga began to search for a role for herself. She gathered together dissident friends and in 1990 launched the Committee of Good Will, a charity which helps the disadvantaged and organises training for Czech media in north America. Olga Havlova — who was, in the words of her husband, "the admittedly hidden hero" — was recently named Czech woman of the year.

Michaëla Febbeck

Olga Havlova, political activist, born July 11, 1933; died January 27, 1996

Another Day

January 30, 1892. A cold dark morning. William chipped wood — I brought it in. A cold wind. W slept better, but he thinks he looks ill — he is shaving now. He asks me to set down the story of Barbara Wilkinson's turtle dove. Barbara is an old maid. She had written the novel. One of them died, the first year I think. The other continued to live alone in its cage for nine years, but for one whole year it had a companion and daily visitor — a little mouse, that used to come and feed with it; and the dove would careen it, and cover over it with its wings and make a loving noise to it. The mouse, though it did not testify equal delight in the dove's company, yet it was at perfect ease. The poor mouse disappeared, and the dove was left solitary till its death. It died of a short sickness, and was buried under a tree with funeral ceremony by Barbara and her maidens, and one or two others.

W worked at *The Pedlar* all the morning. He kept the dinner ready till four o'clock. *Dorothy Wardsworth, Journals (Fraser Stewart, 1982)*

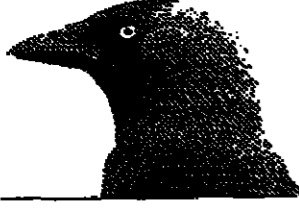
Birthdays

Jack Bowman, chief constable, Tayside, 65; David Brown, cricketer, 54; Sir Fred Catherwood, economist, Conservative MEP, 71; Phil Collins, rock singer, drummer, actor, 45; Christina Foyle, bookseller, 85; Nick Gaselee, racehorse trainer, 57; Gene Hackman,

actor, 64; Patrick Heron, painter, 76; Christopher Howes, chief executive, Crown Estate, 54; Lord Huntington, racehorse trainer, 48; Lord Lowry, former Lord Chief Justice of Northern Ireland, 77; Jim Markwick, chief executive, Guardian Media Group, 60; Mitch Mar-

ray, pop song writer and producer, 56; Louis Osman, architect and goldsmith, 82; Hal Prince, theatrical director and producer, 68; Victoria Principal, actress, 46; John Profumo, president, Toynebee Hall, 31; Vanessa Redgrave, actress, 59; Boris Spassky, chessmaster, 58.

Jackdaw



Open season

Anne Rice
1239 First Street
New Orleans

DEAR President Clinton, Please come out for a flat income tax and beat the Republicans to the punch. Then you and Mrs Clinton can return to your true mission — to bring health care and economic prosperity to all Americans. America has been good to me. As an author, I have enjoyed the American dream. I can personally testify to the fact that the more I make, the more I give away, with no interest in tax deductions. I spread my

income among those I love who need it, elderly relatives, young family members in college. These donations are given with pleasure, and only hampered by the gift tax system. Americans are workers. The graduated tax has demoralised them. A flat tax and health care for all will rejuvenate our nation. We need to give to others directly, without the fear that our tax dollars go only to support the government at its worst.

God bless the press. We cannot live without them, but they are cynical and they can be petty. You are a brilliant President, and can lead us out of the dark entanglement of obsolete insurance plans, clever tax evasion lawyers, and confused and embittered people who are out of work, without health care and without hope.

We are a rich and energetic nation. You and Vice President Gore are our great creative hope. I registered for the first time in years in order to vote for you, and I will vote for you again. Please consider: Flat income tax, health

care for all, and a new respect for individuality and individualism.

Yours sincerely,
Anne Rice.

PS. This is a personal note to President Clinton. It is not copyrighted and can be reprinted and quoted by anyone, however, please do not distort the contents.

From the pen of the author of *Interview With The Vampire*, an open letter to President Clinton, published in *Variety*.

Retrosoc

THE VILLAGE of Nanjie seems every bit a part of the New China with its modern brewery, instant-noodle factory and colour printing plant, all joint ventures with Japanese and German investors. The people work hard, and life there has never been better.

But there's a curious component to Nanjie's success, as a stroll through the village square demonstrates. Standing 10 metres proud is a marble statue of the late Great Helmsman, surrounded by signs exhorting the villagers

to PUT MAO ZEDONG THOUGHT IN COMMAND OF EVERYTHING. At sunrise the public-address system blares The East Is Red; at sunset, Socialism Is Fine. Communal self-criticism sessions are held regularly, and houses, fields and business enterprises are managed collectively. Wristwatches and bicycles are the only items sanctioned for private ownership, and they may soon be communalised as well.

Nostalgia is running high in modern China. The locals, to paraphrase the song, find this retro-socialism fine. In 1986 Wang Hongbin, 44, a longtime Communist Party member and a charismatic leader, proposed that the village's future might best be assured by taking a step into the past. He formed a voluntary farm collective. The strategy was successful by 1990 all the villagers had pooled their land into the collective. Wang, universally admired in Nanjie, attributes the progressive economic situation to political correctness. Private ownership is virtually forbidden "We dis-

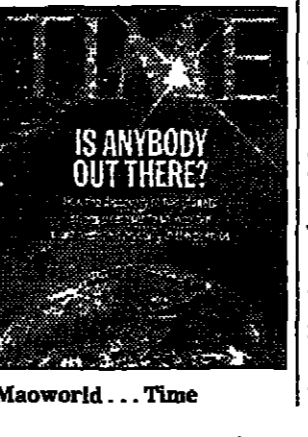
courage people from holding personal bank accounts," says village cadre Li Hejian. In return, residents enjoy the cradle-to-grave benefits of classic socialism: free housing, utilities, health care and education. Salaries are low but that doesn't appear to be a drawback. More than 10,000 migrants have come around the world," Clinton said. "Today, the United States must finally stand up and say 'Enough'. It is time the people of Bosnia finally had some vowels in their in-

Vowel-drop

BEFORE AN emergency joint session of Congress yesterday, President Clinton announced US plans to deploy over 75,000 vowels to the war-torn region of Bosnia. The deployment, the largest of its

kind in American history, will provide the region with the critically needed letters A, E, I, O and U, and is hoped to render countless Bosnian names more pronounceable.

"For six years, we have stood by while names like Ygrivshiv and Tzlynyhr and Glnm have been horribly butchered by millions around the world," Clinton said. "Today, the United States must finally stand up and say 'Enough'. It is time the people of Bosnia finally had some vowels in their in-



Maoworld... Time

comprehensible words. The US is proud to lead the crusade in this noble endeavor."

The deployment, dubbed Operation Vowel Storm by the State Department, is set for early next week, with the Adriatic port cities of Sjljbdvznr and Grzny slated to be the first recipients. Two C-130 transport planes, each carrying over 500 24-count boxes of "E's", will fly from Andrews Air Force Base across the Atlantic and air-drop the letters.

Citizens of Grzny and Sjljbdvznr eagerly await the arrival of the vowels. "My God, I do not think we can last another day," Trzsg Grzndjkn, 44, said. "I have six children and none of them has a name that is understandable to me or to anyone else. Mr Clinton, please send my poor, starved family just one 'E'. Please."

Said Sjljbdvznr resident Grg Hmpfrs, 67: "With just a few key letters, I could be George Humphries. This is my dream."

If the initial airlift is successful, Clinton said the United States will go ahead

with full-scale vowel deployment, with C-130's air-dropping thousands more letters over every area of Bosnia. Other nations are expected to pitch in as well, including 10,000 British "A's" and 6,500 Canadian "U's".

The air-drop represents the largest deployment of any letter to a foreign country since that year, the US shipped 92,000 consonants to Ethiopia, providing cities like Ouauouana, Aouououou, and Aao with vital, life-saving supplies of L's, S's and T's. The consonant-relief effort failed, however, when vast quantities of the letters were intercepted and hoarded by violent, gun-toting warlords. *Net humour, found on the Internet's unironically used rec.humor.funny newsgroup.*

Jackdaw toasts your jewels. E-mail jackdaw@gigamonster.com. Fax 0171-713-4366, Jackdaw, The Guardian, 119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER.

Dan Glaister

صكاك الامل

Fokker suitor declares itself, page 12

Microsoft enlists help of MCI, page 12

Financial Editor: Alex Brummer
Telephone: 0171-239-9610
Fax: 0171-833-4456

Finance Guardian

Eurotunnel is written down

Patrick Donovan
City Editor

EUROTUNNEL faces an effective vote of no confidence as its main British-based banks make formal provisions against the company's \$2 billion debt mountain.

The Midland Bank is expected to become the first to confirm that it has put money aside to cover a possible bad debt when it unveils its full year financial results next month.

No formal announcement about the size of the provisions can be expected. But the bank, an HSBC subsidiary, has decided to confirm the decision to make debt contingency plans if it is quizzed by City analysts.

Provisions, which have already been part of the banking community's continuing discussions with the Bank of England, are also expected from NatWest. It remains unclear whether the bank will be prepared to make any public comment about its exposure.

Midland and NatWest are the biggest outstanding loans to Eurotunnel. Others, including Lloyds, are thought to be planning similar provisions. Analysts said that any meaningful provisions on a debt of this size could be expected to run into hundreds of millions of pounds. They will come as a further embarrassment to Eurotunnel as the financially pressed company was earlier this year forced to negotiate an interest payment standstill because it was unable to keep up with the huge cost of servicing its debt.

The news emerged as reports circulating in Paris claimed that French banks had been asked to make provisions worth as much as 30 per cent of their outstanding loans when announcing their full year financial results. According to the unconfirmed reports, the request came from France's influential Banking Commission.

Notebook

Open market for a fair Exchange



Edited by
Alex Brummer

THE ousted chief executive of the Stock Exchange, Michael Lawrence, may have lacked the communications skills to force the pace of regulatory and systems reforms during his brief tenure but his instincts were correct. The disclosure that he was days away from introducing a more transparent approach to insider trading inquiries, raises the question of what happened to his recommendations. Plainly, this will be a critical issue for the Treasury select committee to tackle when it begins what is likely to be the most thorough investigation into the role and future of the Stock Exchange in modern times.

ny's ambitions to be Europe's top-gun in the aircraft industry. Manfred Bischoff, chief executive of Daimler Aerospace arm Dasa, does not appear to agree. Over the weekend Mr Bischoff has been fleshing out a new approach based on expanding the product range of Airbus Industrie, where Dasa partners Aerospace, British Aerospace and Spain's Casa.

The Dasa rationale is that, in addition to its present lineup, Airbus needs to build both bigger and smaller planes to rival the American competition and that technical commonality — similar cockpit design, common components — is a big seller with airlines. Arch-rival Boeing is well ahead in this regard. Mr Bischoff's vision, however, has no role for AIR, the regional jet marketing organisation involving Bae, Aerospace and Italy's Alenia. AIR's products line-up is scarcely at the leading edge of technology and it is hardly a money spinner but why should the partners be asked to compete with themselves? They might also ask, post-Fokker, what Dasa would bring to the development of a new regional jet.

If the Lawrence proposal were to be adopted, then the mystique which so often surrounds irregular movements in share prices before a material announcement, might be partly lifted. It was the former chief executive's intention that there would be a statement to the market each time the Stock Exchange's surveillance department detected an unusual movement. Details of such an investigation usually only emerge as a result of media questions.

Of course, in the modern marketplace it is possible that cash market prices can be driven by trades outside the Stock Exchange's reach, through over-the-counter options transactions or on the floor of the Life futures and options market. The first indications of a Granada bid for Forte came through an unusually high volume of options contracts. This is an area which has been of some concern to the Securities & Investments Board.

The purpose of announcing a Stock Exchange inquiry would be to assure investors about the integrity of the market. Moreover, having completed its inquiry it would announce what action it had taken: such as passing a report on to the DTI. One of the great frustrations of City regulators is that after they have done the preliminary reports — such as those into Jeffrey Archer's alleged trading in the shares of Anglia prior to the MAI bid — they are generally left to fester. The DTI appears to agree that present practice is wanting. More openness may not be second nature to John Kemp-Welch and the conservative factions on the council: but it is a sure-fire means of restoring confidence.

Hanson town

THE highlight of the Hanson annual general meeting tomorrow will be the announcement of the \$200 million investment in a new, to be named new town in Cambridgeshire, reclaimed from derelict land and a reserve for the great created new. Among the names worth consideration are New Grantham, New Full, Goston, Whiteville, Whitechester, Gordon Springs, White Lakes and, boldest of all, Cheval Four.

Complaints about American regulators' London activity

Paul Murphy

AMERICAN regulators are thought to be probing suspected price manipulation in the London copper market — a move that is reported to have dragged the Securities and Investments Board, the City's premier financial watchdog, into a row over regulatory jurisdiction.

TOURIST RATES — BANK SELLS

Australia 1.97	France 7.45	Italy 2.70	Singapore 2.10
Austria 13.15	Germany 2.10	Malta 0.54	South Africa 5.30
Belgium 44.50	Greece 37.00	Netherlands 2.4500	Spain 184.00
Canada 2.0150	Hong Kong 11.43	New Zealand 2.22	Sweden 10.33
Cyprus 0.7025	India 54.05	Norway 9.57	Switzerland 1.74
Denmark 8.43	Ireland 0.6500	Portugal 2.07	Turkey 32.461
Finland 6.77	Israel 4.73	Saudi Arabia 5.57	USA 1.4700

Supplied by NatWest Bank (excluding Indian rupee and Israeli shekel).

Fidelity reins in its fund traders

Martha Walker
in Washington

THE world's biggest and most powerful investment manager, the Fidelity unit trust group, is reining in its traders with cautionary new controls after becoming the subject of a formal investigation by the US markets watchdog, the Securities and Exchange Commission.

The new policies involve a sharp retreat from emerging markets around the world, rules that limit fund managers to buying no more than 15 per cent of any company, and an end to risky and aggressive strategies which the markets called "vulture investing".

Now controlling \$550 billion (\$264 billion) in funds in the US alone, and often accounting for 10 per cent of the daily trades on the New York Stock Exchange, Fidelity exerts an extraordinary leverage on the markets, and the SEC is investigating whether its start-fund manager, Jeff Vinik, deliberately misled the market.

The SEC inquiry began after reports that Mr Vinik had been talking confidently and publicly about hi-tech stocks, in particular Motorola, when the fund he manages was unleashing two-bid might be said to be bamboozling other investors to buy or hold their hi-tech stocks, even as he was dashing for the exit. From another, he was responsibly holding up the value of a market, and trying to pre-empt the influence of his own investment decisions from artificially depressing an important market sector.

The group has now ordered its managers to stop talking about individual stocks, and analysts say that a far more cautious investment strategy is being adopted.



Crane shot... One of the pictures — of construction in Frankfurt — that yesterday led to Guardian photographer Denis Thorpe receiving the British Picture Editors' award for Business & Industry Photographer of the Year. His colleague Don McPhee received a Special Award

Brussels takeover plan irks UK

Julie Wolf in Brussels

MOVES by the European Commission to tighten its grip on corporate takeovers are certain to provoke fierce opposition from the British authorities.

Karel Van Miert, the Competition Commissioner, who drew up the proposals, argues that more mergers should be sent to Brussels for clearance instead of to national authorities, such as the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

A green paper, expected to be adopted by the commission at its weekly meeting tomorrow, contends that under the EU's current merger rules too many deals with cross-border implications are eluding the EC's control.

has fought for years against giving Brussels the power to vet mergers. It relented when the commission agreed that only a limited number of very large mergers should be vetted at EU level.

Under the EU's merger regulation, which took effect in September 1990, deals only come into the commission's jurisdiction if the companies involved have combined global turnover of 5 billion ecu (\$4 billion). Moreover, at least two of the companies must have turnover of 250 million ecu within the EU.

Mr Van Miert's green paper calls for these thresholds to be cut to 2 billion and 100 million ecu respectively. The commission calculates that such a move would result in 65-80 more cases falling to Brussels for approval, a sizeable increase given that the

commission considered about 100 mergers last year and 95 in 1994.

British officials are expected to argue that the case is for a change not proven. Moreover, the Government will question the ability of the commission's Merger Task Force to handle more cases within the tight time frame set in the merger rules.

The hostility of some Conservative MPs to further transfers of power to Brussels could also limit the Government's room for manoeuvre. The commission's green paper contends that "given the continued integration of European markets and the considerable growth in cross-border merger activity, there are indications that a large number of mergers that have cross-border implications fall below the current thresholds".

Sir Rocco gains £1.2 million solace from Granada coup

Ian King

SIR Rocco Forte, who last week lost control of his 60-year-old hotels and catering empire to Granada, yesterday consoled himself with a £700,000 profit from the £14.9 million spending spree he launched to fight off the bid.

Sir Rocco, whose family's stake in Forte is valued at more than £300 million, sold 3.9 million shares before Granada's bid proved successful.

Buying the shares at 37p and selling them at 395p, Sir Rocco made a profit of £700,000.

£30m sale of Panmure Gordon to Germans may fund Gartmore bid

Pauline Springett

AMERICA'S fourth biggest banking group, NationsBank, yesterday announced the sale of its London stockbroker Panmure Gordon to West Merchant Bank Holdings, part of Germany's third largest banking group, WestLB.

The deal, understood to be worth about \$30 million, immediately fuelled speculation that NationsBank could be preparing to make a full bid for UK fund manager Gartmore.

NationsBank has a joint venture operation with Gartmore, which is 75 per cent owned by the French bank Banque Indosuez. However, the latter has confirmed that it wants to sell Gartmore, and NationsBank has first refusal on the first part of any disposal by the French bank.

Analysts said NationsBank could make a full bid for Gartmore early next week. Patrick Macdougall, chief executive of West Merchant Bank, ruled out any bid for Gartmore by the German banking group, although he acknowledged that it would

Like to have presence in UK asset management in the long term

like to have presence in UK asset management in the long term. "But those businesses are changing hands at fairly hefty prices right now," he said. Mr Macdougall added that West Merchant Bank would concentrate in the short term on organic growth in the UK.

Panmure Gordon is not a large stockbroker, and the business no longer includes fund management, which was transferred by NationsBank into the Gartmore joint venture some time ago.

However, the broker, which employs about 200 staff, has a strong private client business as well as corporate clients. Following the takeover, West Merchant Bank will have about 700 staff, most of them in London. Analysts viewed the purchase as a bid by West Merchant Bank to catch up with its rivals Deutsche Bank and Dresdner Bank in the UK securities market.

Panmure has a team of 30 analysts and about 5 per cent of UK equity market turnover as an institutional firm. It plans to start a market making operation on selected smaller company stocks.

Britannic blames market congestion as its motor insurance business runs out of road

Pauline Springett

BBRITANNIC Assurance yesterday announced it was pulling out of motor insurance because the business was no longer worth its while. "This decision is based on the changed marketplace together with the increasing difficulty in delivering shareholder value from this class of business," said the company.

The move highlights the rapidly changing nature of the UK motor insurance market, which has been fundamentally altered by the new-style direct telephone insurers, notably market leader Direct Line.

said that to compete effectively in the modern motor insurance market the company would have had to restructure completely. The company sells insurance door-to-door and does not have a direct telephone operation.

"It was not worthwhile to continue in the market," said the spokesman. He said Britannic had seen the number of its motor policyholders fall by more than 30 per cent in two years to a mere 26,000

compared with more than two million for Direct Line. "Motor insurance is now bought and sold simply on the basis of price. It is no longer a service relationship," the spokesman said. He expected to see larger players gain increasing dominance.

A spokesman for Sun Alliance, which has just over a million car policyholders, said: "The business is not yet seriously unprofitable, but it is very competitive. There are too many direct insurers."

Car insurance policies

Top ten motor insurers by number of policies, 1994. Millions.

Direct Line	1.25
Sun Alliance	1.20
Royal	1.10
Eagle Star	1.06
Norwich Union	0.88
AGF	0.82
General Accident	0.72
Co-op Insurance Services	0.63
London and Edinburgh	0.62
Churchill	0.50

Source: Direct Line Financial Services

A spokesman for Britannic

Tiger pounces as stricken Fokker takes the flak

Mark Miller and Simon Beavis

SOUTH Korea's Samsung Aerospace yesterday became the first publicly declared suitor for ailing Dutch aircraft manufacturer, Fokker.

The Dutch company confirmed that Samsung was one of a number of firms that had expressed interest in parts of Fokker, but declined to name other possible bidders.

"There are talks going on at the moment, Samsung is one of the parties," a Fokker spokesman said yesterday.

News of Samsung's interest sent Fokker shares sharply higher on the Amsterdam bourse. They rose more than a third to 4.5 guilder (1.72), despite analysts' warnings that they had little value.

Fokker has called key suppliers and partners to meetings tomorrow and on Thursday to try to calm fears over its troubled finances. Rolls-Royce, which supplies Tay engines for the 770 and F100 regional jets, will attend.

Far Eastern interest in Fokker was widely anticipated, after its controlling shareholder, Daimler-Benz, decided to cut off further financial support earlier this month. Another South Korean group, Hyundai, has been tipped as a

possible contender to buy at least part of the company.

There has also been speculation that the Canadian group, Bombardier, might be interested in purchasing part of Fokker, despite repeated denials. Bombardier owns Belfast-based Short Brothers, where up to 1,500 jobs are under threat because of the problems at Fokker.

A Korean swoop on Fokker could help determine the shape of a £1.35 billion joint venture that China and South Korea are setting up to build a 100-seater regional jet-liner. The two countries want a Western partner, with Boeing lining up against European opposition for the third slot.

Any potential buyer is unlikely to take on the whole of Fokker, but a partnership by Samsung could give the South Korean group the technological clout to make it the dominant force in negotiations on the proposed new jet.

The Dutch aircraft group gained breathing space last week by winning court protection from its creditors, which prevents them from demanding payment for a minimum of four weeks, and by persuading the Dutch government to put up £146 million in loans and forward payments. The government cash will allow Fokker to carry on building aircraft for the next



Changing direction... Manfred Bischoff, chief executive of Dasa, now concentrating on its stake in Airbus Industrie

About half of the group's Tay work is associated with the Fokker jets, with the rest being on engines for the Gulfstream IV business jet and the re-engine Boeing 727.

Mr Rose said that airlines

were committed to about 30 Fokker aircraft this year, the equivalent of 60 engines, and that aircraft were still being delivered.

Meanwhile Rolls-Royce sent out a warning to its sup-

pliers yesterday that it would be cutting back their number as part of plans to cut costs by up to 40 per cent over the next two to three years.

Sir Ralph Robins, the chairman, said the number of sup-

pliers had been cut from 1,500 to 500 in the past 10 years but the group was aiming to trim this to around 300.

The move would favour bigger suppliers who would be offered long-term contracts

and the chance to share technology in return for shouldering risks and helping to trim costs. The was a growing realisation in the industry that it must make "more easily affordable" products, he said.

Persimmon beats Beazer to Ideal Homes purchase

Ian King

TRAPFALGAR House, the group spanning shipping and construction, was at the centre of a row last night after selling its Ideal Homes subsidiary to Persimmon Homes for £170 million, despite interest from Persimmon's rival, Beazer Homes.

Beazer's chief executive, Dennis Webb, was locked in talks with advisers, poring over details of the deal — which, if completed, would make York-based Persimmon Britain's fourth-largest housebuilder based in the North-west, was also interested in bidding for Ideal.

The sale must be approved by Trapfalgar's shareholders, who may not be pleased to see it being completed in this way. Beazer is thought to have lobbied several significant institutional shareholders about making a rival offer for Ideal.

But shareholders will be aware that the Persimmon

deal will help to reduce Trapfalgar's debt mountain, which was last month put at £229 million, two-thirds of its market value.

It would also mark a departure from a sector Trapfalgar has been involved with since the early 1980s. Then it bought Bridge Walker, the small British-based housebuilder run by Victor, later Lord, Matthews, the late entrepreneur who guided the group through its glory days in the 60s and 70s.

Meanwhile, Persimmon chairman Duncan Davidson said yesterday that the group would close six regional head offices following the deal, at the cost of an undisclosed number of jobs. Persimmon is also launching a £91 million rights issue, its fourth cash call in ten years, to help finance the deal.

But Mr Davidson defended both moves, saying: "Ideal is an excellent fit for Persimmon. We are looking forward to combining the strengths of both businesses."

Stagecoach gives bus drivers speedy profit

Ian King

MANCHESTER bus drivers who snapped up a stake in their company when it was privatised less than two years ago were last night celebrating windfalls of around £10,000 each.

The drivers, who work for Greater Manchester Buses South, chipped in £12.7 million when the company was auctioned for £25 million, with bankers and venture capitalists providing the balance.

But yesterday the company was bought by Stagecoach, the fast-expanding transport operator, for £40.7 million.

Under the deal, about 2,000 drivers, fitters, electricians and cleaners who bought an average of 1,000 shares each at £1 a time, will sell them to Stagecoach for £10 each.

The vast majority of the workers who bought shares were bus drivers, but the gains will be across the whole

workforce," said commercial director Ross Griffiths. "And on the board there are three worker directors, two managers, two venture capitalists and an independent — there are no fat cats here."

Mr Griffiths said the board had decided that the sale, which is expected to be approved by workers at an extraordinary general meeting next month, was the best way for the business to continue thriving.

The deal is the latest in a string of acquisitions by Perth-based Stagecoach, which last month announced its first foray into rail privatisation, winning the franchise for South West Trains.

Stagecoach has bought about 15 bus companies since it was floated in 1993, recently snapping up two in Devon and Cambridgeshire.

Announcing the deal, chairman Brian Souter said: "I am delighted that we have reached agreement to acquire the company, which demonstrates our continuing commitment to the UK bus market."

But Labour transport spokesman Graham Allen said: "These are assets built up by the public over many years which have been sold at a rip-off price, and which are now making a fortune for short-term owners."

Stagecoach shares closed up 18p at 368p on the news.



Sumitomo snaps up Daiwa US assets

JAPANESE bank Sumitomo has finalised the acquisition of most US assets and operations of its smaller rival, Daiwa, which was hit by scandal last year when it lost \$700 million on the US bond markets. Sumitomo quickly stepped in by indicating that it would be willing to hire some of Daiwa's US staff and purchase some of its US assets.

The deal, signed on Friday, means that Sumitomo will acquire the assets and operations of Daiwa Bank's Commercial Banking Division, the loans of Daiwa Bank Trust Company, and Daiwa Bank's New York branch. Osaka-based Sumitomo is the world's fourth largest bank. — Pauline Springer

UCI in 1,000-job expansion

UNITED Cinema International's planned £100 million expansion, part of its campaign to remain the biggest multiplex cinema chain in the UK, is expected to create about 1,000 jobs. It will open a cinema complex in Dublin in December and five other sites — at Cardiff Bay, Leeds, Manchester and two in London — by the end of next year.

Each complex has between nine and 12 screens and a seating capacity of up to 3,500. UCI said it is exploring possible developments in 10 other locations. Managing director Steve Knibbs said: "Despite tough competition, we have no intention of handing over our pole position in the cinema exhibition market."

A No. 11 spokeswoman said

CHANCELLOR Kenneth Clarke cemented relations between Numbers 10 and 11 Downing Street yesterday and chose a former member of the prime minister's policy unit as his new press secretary. Jill Rutter, 38, was at the policy unit from 1992 to 1994. She moves to her new job after heading the Treasury's Development, Debt and Export Finance team. She takes over from Andrew Hudson, press secretary since 1992. — Larry Elliott

Another brick in the wall

HANSON'S brick subsidiary has acquired a controlling interest in a Belgian brick company. Hanson Brick has agreed to buy 50.1 per cent of Destimpel, and will make an offer for the rest of the shares on the Brussels stock exchange. The price of £61.83 per share values the company at £225 million. It also has £70 million of debt. Destimpel made £17 million profit in the first nine months of the year. Hanson chief executive Derek Bohman said: "This acquisition fits perfectly into our strategy." — Roger Cooke

Camping group shares fall

MORE than £7 million was wiped off Eurocamp's value yesterday after a warning by the holidays group that camping bookings for the year were down 20 per cent over the first nine months of the year. Tom Neville, the chairman, blamed the general weakness in demand for 1996 overseas summer holidays. He hoped bookings would improve and reported an upturn since the turn of the year.

The group has saved money by reducing site operation costs and cutting both permanent and seasonal staff. Profits for the year to October 31 rose from £2.7 million to £9.3 million due to a contribution from Superbreak. — Tony May

Ascot Spanish property sold

ASCOT Holdings, the debt-burdened property and leisure company, has raised £41 million from the sale of its ten Spanish hotels and holiday clubs to a subsidiary of RIA, a hotel group in Spain. Ascot said the terms represented a premium of £3.4 million, before expenses, to the book value of £32.1 million. Its net borrowings will drop from £302.1 million, as at September 30 1995, to about £25 million immediately following the disposal. The board will then be free to focus on seeking suitable acquisitions.

The Spanish properties — four hotels, four holiday clubs and two holiday apartment complexes — produced a profit of £7 million in the six months to September 30, a rise of 25 per cent. — Tony May

Paying for the labels

SALES of private label groceries across Europe have leaped ahead of branded products over the past five years, according to research by Euromonitor published yesterday. Total retail sales have grown by 3.4 per cent per annum since 1990, but sales of private label products soared by an average 7.5 per cent a year. Germany leads in total private label sales but the UK has the highest proportion at 42 per cent of grocery sales — up from 36 per cent in 1990. Switzerland comes second with 37 per cent private label. Italy had the highest loyalty to brands. — Roger Cooke

Receivers move in at LEP

RECEIVERS have been appointed to LEP Group, the debt-laden former parent of the global freight forwarder LEP International. LEP International has been sold to its management for a down payment of £1 and its global sales and marketing director Larry Woelk said the consortium of banks which owned LEP Group had been promised payment of £5 million over the next five years. He said that this company was pleased to be released from LEP Group's £194 million debt burden, which it had been servicing. Coopers & Lybrand insolvency partner Ian Bond said a further £5 million could be collected in the form of profits, deferred considerations and property for the benefit of LEP Group's bankers. — Tony May

BT's American partner joins Microsoft in attempt to dominate online services

Nicholas Barnister Technology Editor

MICROSOFT has enlisted the help of MCI, British Telecom's American partner, in its bid to dominate the online services industry.

MCI, whose aggressive and innovative marketing has made it the second largest long-distance carrier in the US, has agreed to develop and market online and Internet services with Microsoft.

As part of the deal, MCI will market Microsoft Network (MSN), the online service set up by Microsoft to challenge industry leaders such as CompuServe and America Online. MSN, launched at the

same time as Windows 95 last year, already has more than 500,000 subscribers.

MCI will act as a carrier for the service and sell a customised version called MSN from MCI, offering customers access to MSN and the Internet.

The US telecoms group has agreed to use its telemarketing, direct mail and advertising facilities to sell its customised version of MSN and other Microsoft software.

Analysts said the deal threatened the software distribution middlemen. Mark Brunseau, of consultants Cobanet, said the deal would revolutionise the cost structure and economics of the business and set the scene for the distribution of "applets",

Water company warned

Nicholas Barnister and Geoffrey Gibbs

DIRECTORS of Severn Trent Water have been warned that they must use all resources necessary to prevent a repeat of last year's supply problems, no matter how harsh the weather conditions.

Clive Wilkinson, chairman of Ofwat's central consumer services committee has written to Brian Duckworth, STW's managing director, welcoming the company's plan to spend about £130 million on improvements but expressing concern about the outcome.

The regulator acknowl-

edged that the company did not have the power to make rain or a crystal ball to forecast rainfall. But he said the company was expected to plan for the worst scenario in terms of rainfall and increased demand.

He added that responsibility for ensuring customers received the full water and sewerage service lay with the board.

Bill Fraser, the Scotsman whose £217,000 pay-and-pensions package as managing director of South West Water caused outrage among consumers last summer, is to leave company next month as part of a boardroom shake-up.

The company last night

refused to comment on suggestions that Mr Fraser was quitting after being passed over for the job of chief executive being created in response to the Greenbury report.

South West Water, which has faced adverse publicity over the past year because of poor water quality and drought orders, said it was conducting "a broad search" for a chief executive.

SWW said it had agreed to Mr Fraser, managing director of the core water service business, leaving the organisation at the end of February. He will provide consultancy services for the next 12 months.

Enlarged RPR foresees lean times for its staff

OUTLOOK/Drugs group that yearned for growth is to reduce workforce by 10pc and sell assets. Roger Cowe reports

FRANCO-American drugs company Rhône-Poulenc Rorer, which acquired what was left of Fisons for £1.8 billion last October, warned yesterday that it expects to cut 10 per cent of the group workforce over the next 18 months. Most of these sales have already been identified.

The company last night refused to indicate where the jobs axe would fall. A spokesman said 1,600 jobs would go this year, with a further 1,800 in 1997, and repeated RPR's warning at the time of the takeover that most of the overlap with Fisons would be in the UK and US. So far the only announcement has been last week's news that 140 marketing jobs were to be cut in Eastbourne and Loughborough. More announcements are expected within weeks, but RPR said there would not be wholesale closures.

"We are not looking for a wholesale slash and burn,"

RPR is a classic case, illustrating the belief that a drug company can only succeed if it is one of the largest in most leading markets. That was the logic behind the merger of Rorer and Rhône-Poulenc's drug businesses in 1990. The merger gave the French chemicals group a presence in the US, which is the largest drugs market. But it still left the company well down the league table. Even after the Fisons acquisition, RPR is still outside the top 10 in the global drugs league.

IF BEING number two was not good enough for Glaxo, it is difficult to see how a company like RPR can hope to succeed. One answer is that Glaxo had particular problems, because of the imminent loss of patent protection on Zantac. Another might be that you can do well, no matter how small you are, by concentrating on key areas.

RPR seems to believe in the latter approach, although the company has managed to narrow its focus only as far as five therapeutic areas: asthma, where the Fisons purchase has shot it to the top

of the table, plasma proteins, thrombosis, anti-infectives and cancer treatment.

But RPR shows the cost of building up, not just in the charges for absorbing Fisons. One cost is an estimated \$25 million as part of the French government's answer to dealing with the country's health-care costs. More substantially, the group spent \$785 million last year on research and development. That was 15 per cent of sales and 28 per cent up on the previous year.

Michel de Rosen, chairman and chief executive, described this as "choosing to invest in future products". But he said that, as part of the new austerity, R&D spending would not be allowed to increase faster than sales.

Mr de Rosen described the change in stance at the company as moving from hunting to farming. While most of the farming seems to be of the reaping variety at Fisons, the analogy applies to new drugs as well as new subsidiaries. RPR has recently approved several newly approved products. Now is the time to grow their sales.

Rhône-Poulenc Rorer	
Stock market value £7.4bn	
Share price 566p ▲ \$1%	
Workforce 28,000	
Interest cover 7.5	
Dividend	
Sales (\$m)	Operating profit (\$m)
1992 4,086	1992 675
1993 4,019	1993 675
1994 4,487	1994 598
1995 5,142	1995 639

البيان المالي

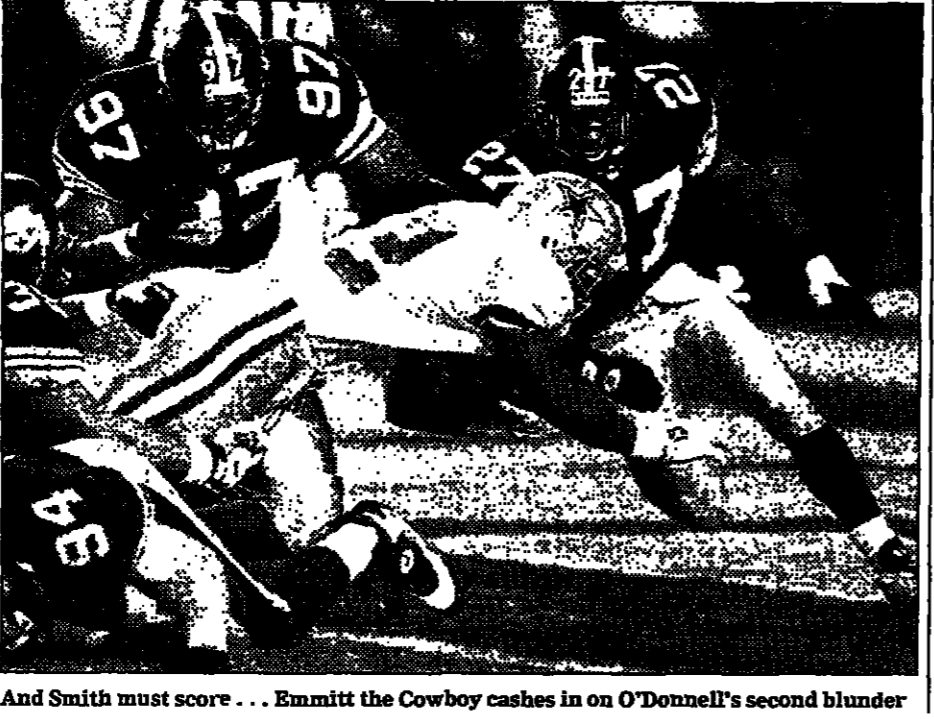
American Football Super Bowl XXX: Dallas Cowboys 27, Pittsburgh Steelers 17

O'Donnell throws it all away

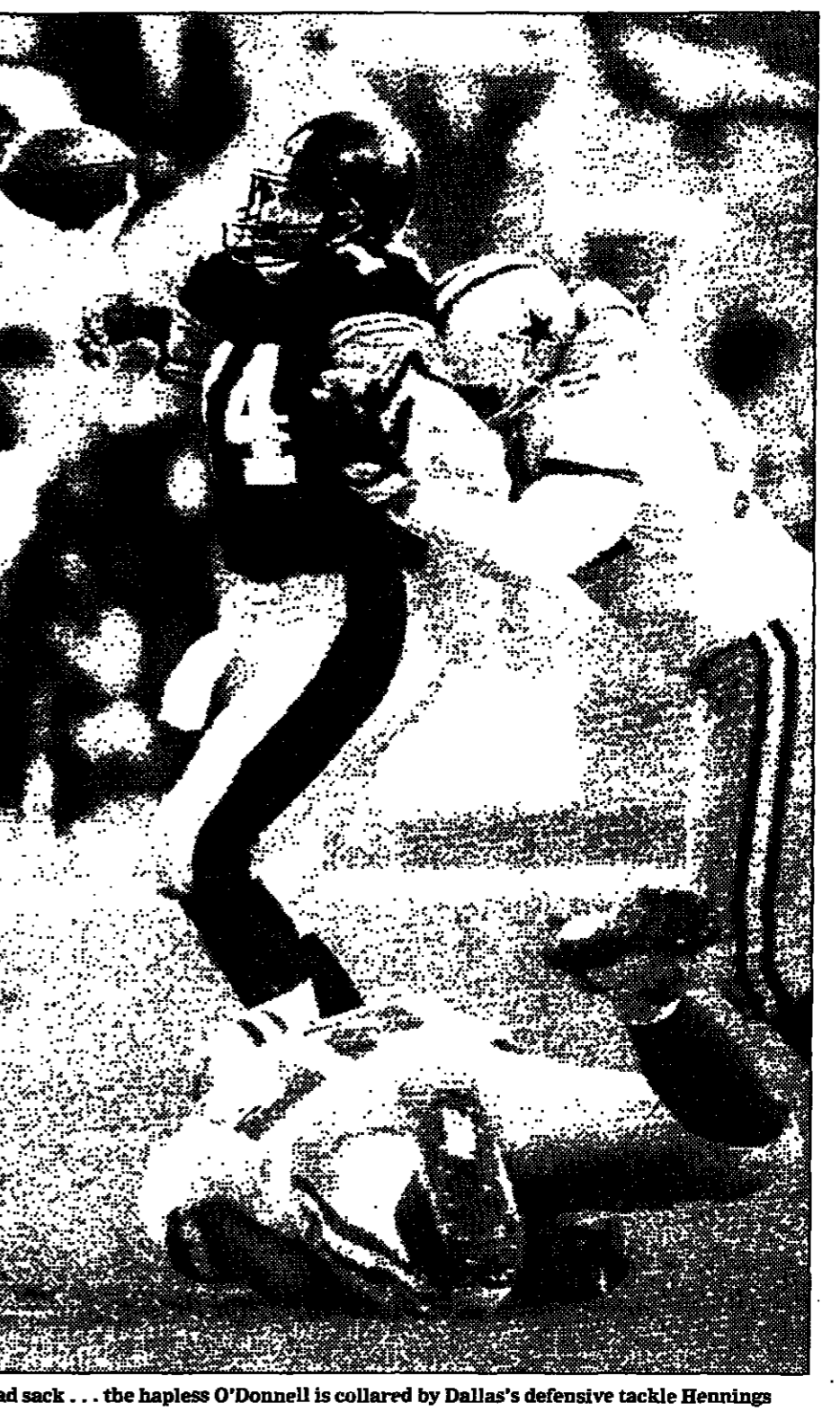
Mark Tran in Phoenix THE Pittsburgh quarterback Neil O'Donnell went into Sunday's Super Bowl XXX boasting the league's safest pair of hands...

Devil Stadium, perched on a hilltop in the Arizona desert, given little realistic chance of winning. But after a shaky start the Steelers mounted a surprisingly stiff challenge to the sauntering Cowboys.

like his ultra-smooth predecessor Jimmy Johnson. Described as a "bozo" by the New York Post after his notorious fourth-and-one call to run the ball which cost the match against the Philadelphia Eagles in December, Switzer has now won a chunk of credibility for nursing the Cowboys through a difficult season to their third Super Bowl in four years.



And Smith must score... Emmitt the Cowboy cashes in on O'Donnell's second blunder



Sad sack... the hapless O'Donnell is collared by Dallas's defensive tackle Hennings

Racing Pharaneer goes for weekend four-timer

Ken Oliver WITH Cheltenham just six weeks away, Saturday's meeting at Sandown could throw light on several races at the Festival meeting.

With One Man, the Gold Cup favourite, going to Cheltenham without a run since his 14-lengths romp in the King George at Sandown on January 6, Sunday's Hennessy Cognac Gold Cup at Leopardstown will be viewed with great interest with Jodami's Double at Warwick earlier this month.

Cure, Flashing Steel, at 9-2, is regarded as the best chance of winning the prize which has gone to English challengers for the past six years. At Lingfield this afternoon, Thornthorn Estate looks worthy of the nap in the Carole Blackham Handicap.

Lingfield (All-weather Flat) with form

Table of racing results and form for Lingfield (All-weather Flat). Includes race numbers, names of horses, jockeys, and trainers.

Musselburgh runners and riders

Table of racing results and form for Musselburgh runners and riders. Includes race numbers, names of horses, jockeys, and trainers.

Dato Star prepares for Champion with away day on the all-weather

DATO STAR, a Champion Hurdle contender, will make his hurdling debut at Wetherby on Saturday after undergoing a racecourse gallop at Southwell yesterday, writes Ken Oliver.

Malcolm Jefferson's gelding, who is 20-1 for the Cheltenham race, covered one mile, six furlongs of the all-weather track in the hands of stable apprentice Michael Newton.

Group shares fall

Group shares fell as investors reacted to a report that the Bank of England might raise interest rates.

Irish property sold

Irish property sold at a record price, with a Dublin mansion fetching over £10 million.

Move in at LEP

Move in at LEP as the new airport terminal is completed and flights begin to arrive.

Results

Table of racing results from various tracks including Lingfield, Musselburgh, and Sandown. Lists race numbers, winners, and other participants.

14 SPORTS NEWS

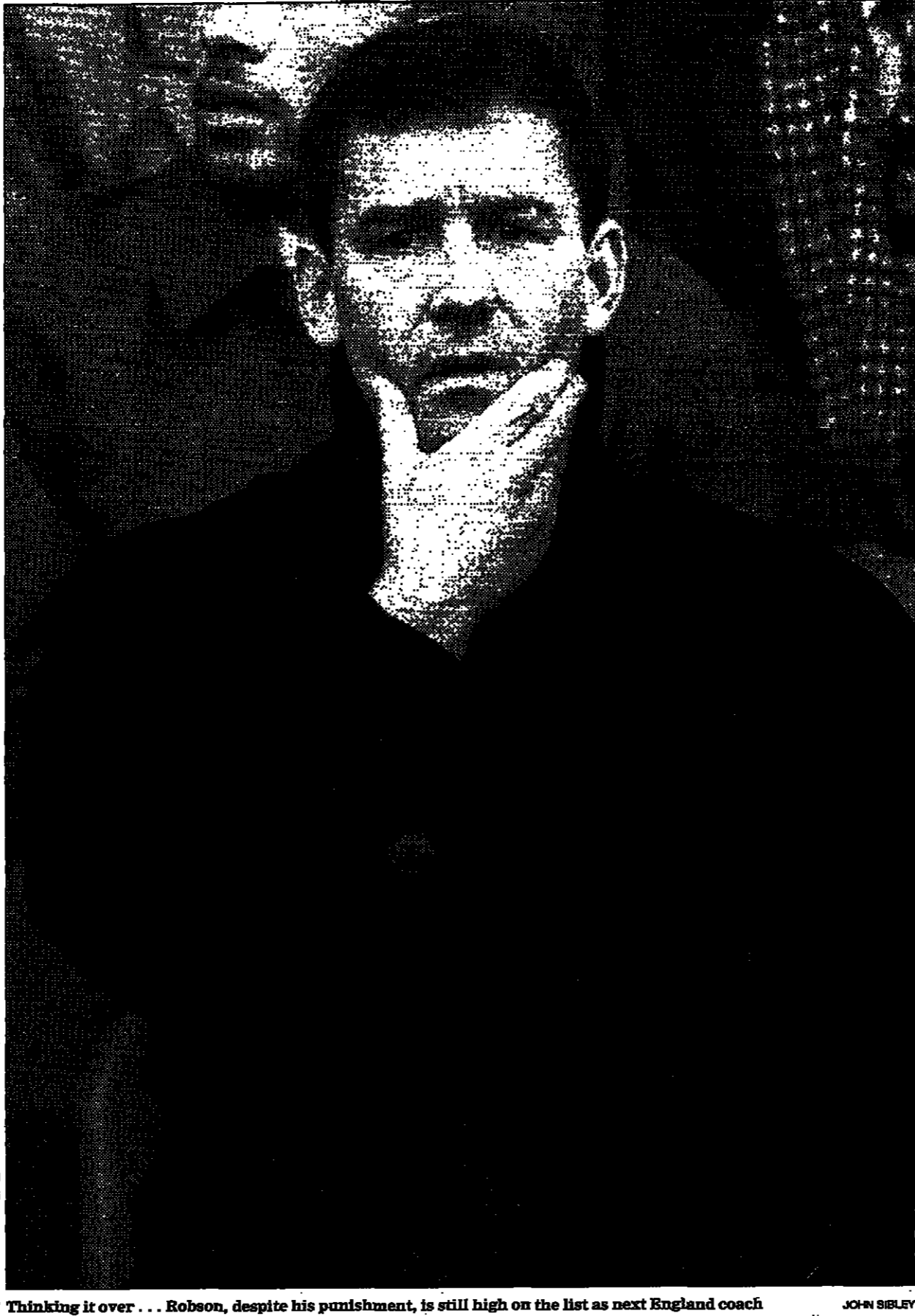
Soccer

Robson hit by FA fine for abuse

Ian Ross

RYAN ROBSON yesterday fell foul of the FA, which is believed still to be keen to see Middlesbrough's manager installed as the next coach of England. On the eve of the FA selection committee's meeting to discuss successors to Terry Venables, Robson was fined £750 after being found guilty of bringing the game into disrepute in his first such offence in a career which has spanned more than 20 years. Robson was also warned about his future conduct, along with two of his players Nigel Pearson and Neil Cox, both of whom were found guilty of the same charges and fined £500 each. The charges related to incidents around the players' tunnel and dressing-room area after the Premiership game against Blackburn Rovers at Ewood Park on December 16. All three were accused of making foul and abusive remarks to the referee Paul Danson after Middlesbrough's 1-0 defeat. Robson and his players waived their right to personal hearings, instead submitting letters of explanation. Despite the blemish to his record, Robson will be high on the list of names considered for England today by the five-man committee chaired by the FA chairman Sir Bert McClellan. Ian Wright could face a disciplinary charge unless he fails to satisfy an FA disciplinary committee after comments the Arsenal striker made about referees. Wright, speaking on Arsenal's official Clubline line, said some referees behaved like "little Hitler". Although he later wrote a letter of apology, he has been called to Lancaster Gate to explain himself. Arsenal's manager Bruce Rioch is also waiting to hear

if he will face an FA charge over his bust-up with Newcastle's assistant manager Terry McDermott in the Coca-Cola Cup tie at Highbury earlier this month. Rioch, too, has apologised, while McDermott has tendered his observations to Lancaster Gate. West Ham are poised to add Portuguese football's most precocious young talent, Dani, to their fast-expanding legion of foreign players. The 18-year-old winger, who came on as a substitute in England's friendly Portugal at Wembley in December, will spend the rest of the season on extended trial at Upton Park if West Ham can agree personal terms. Dani currently plays for Sporting Lisbon but, after the Bosman ruling, he publicly announced his desire to move to England. He enlisted the help of the former England manager Bobby Robson — now in charge at Porto — and Robson recommended him to West Ham's manager Harry Redknapp. If Dani impresses, he would seek to make the move permanent if West Ham could meet an asking price of between £2.5 million and £3 million. Everton's full-back Marc Hottiger will miss next week's FA Cup fourth-round replay at Port Vale because of a delay over a new work permit. The Swiss international recently completed a £700,000 move to the Merseyside club from Newcastle. Liverpool's Ian Rush, substituted last week against Italy, may have played his last game for Wales. Wales' all-time leading scorer is retiring considering seriously from international football 16 years after making the first of 74 appearances for his country. "I have been thinking over my future at this level for some time now," he said. "When I do reach a decision, the Welsh coach Bobby Gould will be the first to know."



Thinking it over... Robson, despite his punishment, is still high on the list as next England coach

Cricket

Lara extends olive branch to Richardson

Paul Weaver in Trinidad on hopes of an uneasy peace

BRIAN LARA is usually more adept at waving his 501 hat than he is at swishing olive branches but, as he prepared to join West Indies' World Cup squad in Barbados tomorrow he called for an end to his rift with the captain Richie Richardson. After receiving the Man of the Match award for his innings of 77 and 119 in Trinidad's three-wicket win in their Red Stripe Cup opener against Barbados at Guayana Park, Pointe-a-Pierre, he said: "West Indies cricket has a responsibility to the West Indies people and we must all be professional. We must forget the past and look to the future. I am looking forward to the cricket camp in Barbados although it depends on how the team management plan to use it. Hopefully there will be a lot of good cricket talk. I think most of the other players understand my situation and the attitude of the Barbados contingent in the past few days has been very encouraging." Lara and Richardson are still unlikely to embrace in Bridgetown tomorrow. Their relationship is colder than chilled rum punch since Lara's criticism of his captain in England last season was made public a few weeks ago

following his decision not to tour Australia. Richardson, a poor captain of an ageing, declining team who is having problems with his own form, knows he is likely to be replaced by Lara before the end of the year. Lara added yesterday: "We are still a good one-day side, although we are bound to miss Carl Hooper in the World Cup. Despite some disappointing results in Australia we have made a good start to the new year, losing just once in four games. "I intend to use Barbados to get in plenty of net practice. I am rusty. Even though I scored runs in this game my timing is not there yet. I badly need more time in the middle." The rather forlorn looking Barbados fast bowler Anderson Cummins, Vasbert Drakes, Otis Gibson and Paterson Thompson might have disagreed. Although Lara was certainly not at his most fluent during his first-innings century bore examples of his richest strokeplay. Meanwhile Lara continues to be plagued by his problems off the pitch. He is building a mansion on one of the green, lush hills that overlook Port of Spain but the construction work was stopped when the world-record batsman could not provide a deed for the land. When it was finally handed over, shifting land caused another delay. Lara, it seems, is only trouble-free when he is at the wicket.

Waugh sends Boon off on a win

AUSTRALIA lost a senior pro but won a series yesterday when David Boon bowed out after 107 Tests, with his team-mates celebrating a 3-0 whitewash of Sri Lanka thanks to a 148-run victory with an hour to spare in the third and final Test in Adelaide. They were even moved to hugging the beefy mustached Tasmanian, omitted from the World Cup and now retiring at the age of

35. "David came into the team in 1984 when it wasn't doing too well and he leaves after 107 Tests, with his team-mates celebrating a 3-0 whitewash of Sri Lanka thanks to a 148-run victory with an hour to spare in the third and final Test in Adelaide. They were even moved to hugging the beefy mustached Tasmanian, omitted from the World Cup and now retiring at the age of

BBC captures Auld Enemy clash

Russell Thomas

BBC TV was last night hailing its capture of the England v Scotland international as the potential cup of Euro '96 coverage this summer, predicting that the game would draw an audience of around 17 million. In claiming the game's oldest international on June 15 at Wembley, the BBC has salvaged some pride after the most devastating loss of the FA Cup final, its exclusive property for more than 60 years, to ITV from 1988. The agreement drawn up with ITV yesterday to share coverage of England's biggest soccer jamboree since 1986 presents terrestrial TV viewers with rare blanket cover-

age of top-class football. Every Euro '96 game — there are 24 alone in the group phase — will be screened. BBC chiefs were ecstatic about securing the all-British contest. "The game has captured the imagination of football fans north and south of the border," said Brian Barwick, head of production for BBC TV sport. "It is a massive match — the focus of the opening round. I'm confident the game will attract a similar audience to the near 17 million for the 1990 World Cup semi-final between England and West Germany on BBC." ITV will screen four of the six Group A games. It has the Scotland v Switzerland on June 8 — and Scotland's first game,

together with the probable deciding games in the section, Scotland v Switzerland and England v Holland. ITV's head of football Jeff Farmer said: "We negotiated a sensible arrangement with the BBC and I am delighted with ITV's package. "We will kick off with the razzmatazz of the opening ceremony and England's vital first game, followed by Scotland's match with Holland. "We have then got the exclusive live coverage of the two games which will probably decide if England and Scotland stay in the competition." Both companies will screen the final live but BBC will have first choice of quarter-final matches. If either Scotland or England reach the

semi-finals, it is probable that both ITV and BBC will provide coverage of the match. There will be no duplication of live games until the final stages of the competition. Each broadcaster has the first option to screen highlights of matches they have not covered live. ITV, June 8: England v Switzerland, June 12: Spain v Bulgaria, June 16: Holland v Scotland, June 21: Turkey v Greece, June 25: Bulgaria v Romania, June 29: Italy v France, June 30: Italy v Russia, June 13: Scotland v Hungary, June 17: Germany v Germany, June 21: England v Holland, Scotland v Turkey, June 25: Denmark, June 29: Second choice of quarter-finals, June 30: Germany v Czech Republic, June 3: Portugal v Portugal, June 7: Romania v France, June 11: Italy v Russia, June 15: Switzerland v Holland, June 19: Portugal v Turkey, June 23: England v Scotland, June 27: 16th and 19th dec. New South Wales v Bulgaria, Romania v Spain, June 30: Russia v Czech Republic, Italy v Denmark, June 3, 23/24th First choice of quarter-finals.

Kinnear puts six on transfer list to encourage next generation

WIMBLEDON'S manager Joe Kinnear yesterday put six players on the transfer list to pave the way for the club's emerging youngsters to challenge for first-team places. Gary Blissett, the striker signed from Brentford for £350,000 in 1993, heads the list and is thought to be in negotiations with Portsmouth and Wycombe. Vinnie Jones has already had a transfer request granted but Wimbledon have so far resisted Birmingham's offer of £550,000 for the midfielder, plus £250,000 if he helps Barry Fry's team win promotion to the Premiership. Jones is keen to go to Birmingham but Wimbledon are holding out for a

£500,000 straight cash payment. Kinnear has also told his defenders Scott Fitzgerald and Roger Joseph, the midfielder Justin Skinner and forwards Aidan Newhouse and Gerald Doherty that they can leave Wimbledon. Manchester United's promising young winger Terry Cooke has joined Sunderland on loan for a month and will make his debut against Tranmere Rovers at Roker Park tonight. Shrewsbury's FA Cup fourth-round replay with Liverpool, scheduled for February 6, has now been switched to February 7 (8pm) and will be an all-ticket match.

Rugby League

Salford draw short straw

Paul Fitzpatrick

ONLY one clear-cut tie emerged from last night's first-round Challenge Cup draw, and for Salford it produced the ultimate test. Their task is to prevent Wigan winning their 44th consecutive Challenge Cup tie and, if any man knows what is required, it is the Salford coach Andy Gregory, who played for Wigan in five of the eight final appearances they have made since 1988. Salford, the First Division champions, have home advantage and Wigan will recall that they lost twice within a few weeks at The Willows in 1991, first in the championship and then in the Regal Trophy. West Hull, one of two amateur clubs remaining, might not have finished their giant-killing yet. They beat York last Friday and their reward is another home draw, against Carlisle or Wakefield. For Thatch Heath, the other amateur club, there is a chance that they could play their doorstep neighbours St Helens. First, though, they must beat Rochdale and Saints must defeat Castleford.

Paris's chief executive Tas Baitter is "an extremely strong squad and we are delighted that so many French stars have decided to join us." The Under-21 international between Great Britain and France, due to be played at Hunslet Haws' new stadium in Leeds on Sunday, has been postponed. The weather has been blamed but, with so many fourth-round Challenge Cup ties still to be completed, many of them next weekend, some little resemblance to the original selection. Tonight's academy international against France at Salford has also been postponed and is now due to be played next Friday at Hull KR. Salford hope to sign Sonny Whakarua, the 30-year-old Sheffield Eagles forward who is on loan at Wakefield. The deal hinges on Whakarua, also a target for Keighley, leaving his Doncaster home.

Pools Forecast

Table with columns for FA CANTONING PREMIERSHIP, ENGLISH LEAGUE FIRST DIVISION, and 1990 DIVISION. Lists various football clubs and their predicted positions.

Results

Table with columns for Soccer, Cricket, and Golf. Lists match results and scores for various sports.

Fixtures

Table with columns for Soccer, Cricket, and Golf. Lists upcoming fixtures and dates for various sports.

Sport in brief

Table with columns for Table Tennis, Athletics, and Boxing. Lists brief news items for various sports.

Teamtalk advertisement for The Independent News Reports Service. Includes contact information: Call 0891 33 77+ and a list of sports news items.

American Football advertisement for SUPERBOWL XXXI. Includes details about the event and ticket information.

Boxing advertisement for Sun Caiyun of China. Includes details about the fight and ticket information.

Boxing advertisement for Bill Sorrensen. Includes details about the fight and ticket information.

Large vertical advertisement on the right edge of the page, partially cut off, featuring the name 'Lee' and other text.

Rugby

Paul Fitzpatrick on a ground-share scheme at Headingley that may be followed by other northern get-togethers

Leeds to forge new union

An alliance that may set a trend with northern rugby union and league clubs will be forged in Leeds today. Leeds' rugby union side is to move next season from its current dwelling at Kirkstall to the rugby league club's home at nearby Headingley.

Leeds' union club, at present in danger of relegation, would undoubtedly benefit from ground-sharing. Apart from the possibility of borrowing players during the winter, they would be playing in an excellent stadium and on an excellent surface.

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Tait... union links Wigan very much as the cash-strapped lodgers.

Tennis

ATP defends drugs policy

THE tennis authorities moved yesterday to defend their drug-testing procedures, despite the threat of court action this week by Mats Wilander and Karl Novacek to challenge the results of an alleged positive test for cocaine at last year's French Open.

ATP says its samples are all analysed at International Olympic Committee accredited laboratories and that it follows IOC guidelines on testing. That can be a lengthy process, But Alfano said: "It's more important that the decision is correct than how long it takes. We wouldn't announce any findings until a player has exhausted a long list of options. But we are talking about a player's career here, so it is right that they should be able to defend themselves to the full."

Rugby Union

Captain adds weight to Wales optimism

David Plummer on Jonathan Humphreys and how he became a hooker of substance

JONATHAN Humphreys epitomises the spirit of New Wales. Bullish even for a captain, the 26-year-old Cardiff hooker has no doubts that his country is standing on the threshold of success after 17 years of relative obscurity.

Evans then worked on Humphreys's line-out throwing, converting him to the two-handed style favoured in Australia. The arrival of the lock Derwyn Jones at Arms Park helped make Cardiff the best line-out team in Wales, Evans's immediate objective.

few weeks ago, he was given a room with Ieuan Evans so that the new cap had the benefit of Ieuan's experience.

"As soon as they got through the door, Leigh ripped into him. He just wanted to get out and play, unfazed by the whole experience and not troubled by nerves. It will be the same at Twickenham. England have a great reputation and they have been Europe's best side this decade but we will not hold them in awe."



If the cap fits... Jonathan Humphreys relishes leading Wales

"The difference is that he now has the frame to match his heart" - Phillips

part of the Jonathan Humphreys vocabulary. Humphreys acknowledges his debt to Evans who left Cardiff last month to return to Australia. "I was very sorry to see him go because he had an incredible influence on my career. He was more than just a coach to me."

This little guy came as one of the bookers. His name was Jonathan Humphreys. He was worse than useless. He could not tackle, could not scrummage and could not throw the ball into the line-out. He has obviously worked on his game.

Bath and Bristol on course for cup derby

BATH, the holders, face the probability of a derby against Bristol at the Memorial Ground as a result of yesterday's draw at Twickenham for the Pilkington Cup quarter-finals.

London Irish, who lost to Leicester in the 1980 final, appear to be the most likely League Two candidates for a place in this season's semi-finals. If the promotion-seeking Exiles win their fifth-round game at Leeds, their quarter-final will be at home to either West Hartlepool or Coventry. A double of League One and Twickenham may not be beyond them.

ter-finals can be staged on February 24, weather permitting, there is the matter of seven fifth-round ties to be settled. Postponed cup games take priority over Courage league fixtures which means they cannot be rearranged for next month's league Saturdays, February 10 or 17. Some matches such as Leeds v London Irish, which do not entail the release of internationals, could be played this week.

March. "The bad weather suddenly makes all these Saturdays in November when we didn't have any league games look very precious," said Quin. "Good weather in previous seasons has lulled us into a false sense of security."

could cost us the league title." Bath are trying to persuade Gloucester, whom they were originally due to play at Kingsholm on December 30, to stage their League One match on April 20. Bath, who currently lead the league by two points, may also have their away game against Orrell, scheduled for February 10, rearranged for March 9 in order to accommodate their cup game against Wakefield. The Yorkshire club have yet to agree to host that game on February 10.

Roumat talks with Wasps

OLIVIER ROUMAT, the Dixie and France lock, is the latest overseas player to be courted by an English club. Roumat has had talks with Wasps over a possible move to London next season.

Basketball

Magic returns to the Lakers

MAGIC JOHNSON'S on-off return to the NBA is again. The player whose passing and all-round game placed him in a trinity of outstanding players during the Eighties signed a new contract with the Los Angeles Lakers yesterday. He will play his first NBA game for 4 1/2 years against the Golden State Warriors at the Los Angeles Forum tonight.

head coach. He has intended to return to the NBA several times but his 1992 comeback was aborted when some players proved unwilling to expose themselves to infection, however faint the risk.

Ice Hockey

Swedes and freeze could land Warriors in hot water

THE Newcastle Warriors are under scrutiny by the British Ice Hockey Association on two unrelated counts: for failing to fulfil a fixture last Saturday and using two players who were unregistered on Sunday.

Durham may have regretted not following their neighbour's example after losing 3-3 at Nottingham where Neil Morgan (3) and Ashley Tait (2) led the home side's scoring.

to obtain two further players as replacements, even if that is after this season's transfer deadline at midnight tomorrow.

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Athletics

London Marathon pledges itself to BBC with Flora and chips

THE London Marathon wants to pledge its television future to the BBC until the end of the century to ensure the event continues to reach as wide an audience as possible, even if that means turning down more money from a satellite channel.

Instead the money is being spread around to promote other initiatives. A national television advertising campaign, which will run through until race day, has already started.

renewal. Flora are taking the message to millions. The BBC has shown the race since its founding in 1981 and helped it become established alongside the Boat Race and the Grand National as one of the country's great sporting occasions.

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Vertical text on the left margin: a extends e branch richardson... sends Boon off on a win... league ford draw art straw... illan back for nothing

SportsGuardian

United poach another player

Ian Ross

MANCHESTER United's desire to ensnare English football's brightest young talent landed them in trouble again yesterday when they were found guilty of "poaching" a top schoolboy player for the second time this month.

United were fined £20,000 by the Football Association for making an illegal approach to the 17-year-old Oldham Athletic player David Brown whose decision to leave Boundary Park could well cost the Old Trafford club in excess of £100,000 once the question of compensation has been settled.

Two weeks ago United escaped punishment after being found guilty of illegally approaching Arsenal's Matthew Wicks, son of the former Chelsea player Steve, because the 16-year-old decided to return to Highbury.

An FA Commission instructed United to pay undisclosed costs of yesterday's hearing.

"The members took into consideration the mitigation presented by Manchester United and decided to fine the club. The fine imposed stands separate from the question of compensation between the parties or referred to the Football League appeals committee for a decision," said an FA spokesman.

United's chairman Martin Edwards said last night that his club was "seriously considering" lodging an appeal against yesterday's verdict.

The fate of Faustino Asprilla, who has denied his proposed £8.7 million transfer to Newcastle is in doubt because of a knee injury, now appears to be in the hands of the immigration authorities.

A Department of Employment spokesman has confirmed that the Colombian international's application for a work permit had been received and was being studied.

Although Asprilla meets DoE criteria in terms of his footballing pedigree, there is the Colombian's criminal record to consider. He is serving a suspended prison sentence for a firearms offence.

Asprilla's belief that he is now fully fit and ready to complete the move from Parma may not be shared by Newcastle, who have asked the Italian club for copies of all his medical records.

RANGERS' WOE AS ALLEN MISSES SECOND-HALF PENALTY



Feet first... John Spencer tries to intercept a clearance from QPR's goalkeeper Jürgen Sommer at Loftus Road last night

PHOTOGRAPH: FRANK BARON

FA Cup, fourth round Queens Park Rangers 1, Chelsea 2

Chelsea's spot of luck

David Lacey

CHELSEA'S advance towards the fifth round of the FA Cup was as measured as their tread into the fourth, but left less to chance until Quashie revived Queens Park Rangers' interest in last night's tie with an outstanding shot. Then they missed a penalty two minutes later.

QPR had early opportunities to gain some sort of grip on the match but squandered them all, and they looked out of the contest after Peacock and Furlong had given Chelsea a 2-0 half-time lead. Quashie then met a clearance from Duberry in the 67th min-

ute with a firm left-footed shot into the top right-hand corner of the net but after Hitchcock, the Chelsea goalkeeper, had been penalised in the 68th for fouling Hateley, Allen dragged his kick wide.

A fifth-round visit to West Ham or Grimsby faced the winners of last night's tie. Dicks or Haddocks, either way, as ties go, it was more of a plum than a plum.

For QPR, however, victory was of more immediate concern than its consequences. They had lost five successive games in the Premiership and needed the boost that success in the Cup can sometimes give to a team's confidence.

Ray Wilkins, once a youthful talent at Chelsea and now a young manager at Loftus

Road, had been assured by his chairman that whatever happened this match would not be his Waterloo. Nothing, however, had been said about Cannon Street.

Where style is concerned Rangers' hearts may still lie in the right place, unlike their defenders, whose error-ridden ways have lost them several winnable home games, including their league match with Chelsea at the beginning of the year.

Last night Chelsea were without Wise, their distributor, and Hughes, their differential, because of suspensions but after their third-round performances against Newcastle could still afford to be optimistic. In Wise's absence, however, a lot depended on Gullit and the amount of licence he was allowed.

Not that there was much time to assess this before QPR should have scored. In the third minute Duberry met

Bardsley's centre with a weak clearance and Holloway nodded the ball back to leave Hateley with a gaping goal to aim at.

Normally you would close the book on the chances of Hateley scoring in such circumstances. This time, however, he headed wide of the far post and Chelsea looked more relaxed thereafter.

QPR's luck appeared to be following a familiar downward course when Bardsley, essential to their right flank both in attack and defence, was forced off after 11 minutes having damaged his ribs in an earlier tackle. Yet within three minutes of coming off the bench, his replacement, Maddix, had seen Hateley kick a header over the bar. Hateley having nodded back Holloway's corner.

Maybe seasoned Loftus Road supporters recognised the signs and suspected the worst. At all events, Rangers

went behind after 19 minutes with just the echo of a sigh.

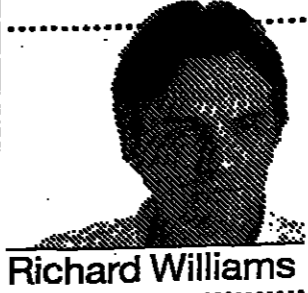
The goal was a mixture of sound improvisation and sheer luck. Gullit collected a throw-in on the right and found Peacock who then exchanged passes with Spencer before seeing his shot take a big deflection off Impey that took the ball beyond Sommer's reach.

The first half had reached stoppage time when McDonald, under pressure from Furlong, made a mess of clearing Duberry's long ball. Spencer read the situation quicker than anybody, and as Furling turned for goal found him with a neat overhead pass.

QPR were caught square and open and Furlong coolly increased Chelsea's lead.

Queens Park Rangers: Sommer; Bardsley (Maddix, 11min), McDonald, Yates, Charlis, Simulair, Holloway, Quashie, Impey, Allen, Hateley. **Chelsea:** Hitchcock, Paterson, Duberry, Lee, Clarke, Pletten, Gullit, Newton, Peacock, Spencer, Furlong. **Referee:** P. Durkin (Portland).

Time for Wales to side-step into the dark



Richard Williams

BEAR no malice towards Neil Jenkins. He is a fine athlete, only 24 years old, and I wish him a long and happy career. But when Kevin Bowring announces Wales's line-up for the England match this morning, I hope to see the name of Arwel Thomas in Jenkins's place at No. 10.

For that to happen, Jenkins will probably need to have failed last night's fitness test, which took the form of a private practice match, arranged to check on his recovery from a shoulder injury. That would be bad luck on Jenkins — who, although he may not look like anyone's idea of a classical Welsh international outside-half, has served his country with a diligence that is almost painfully visible every time he goes through his shuffling, twitching place-kicking routine.

Yet youth must be served and it is the way of history that Jenkins, a beneficiary of the doctrine when he made his debut against England in 1991 and has since scored 419 points in 38 senior internationals, may now find himself its sacrificial victim.

Thomas is aged 21 — hardly a baby. He is only three years younger than Jenkins, which means that we are not talking about a generational shift here. But the subtlety of significance of the change would be just as great.

TO select Thomas would signal not merely Bowring's appreciation of the fly-half's delicate gifts, and of what they could bring to his overall strategy, but his confidence in the other members of his team to do a protective job. For Thomas does not conform to the general trend for top athletes in most sports to grow taller and heavier. He is 5ft 7in tall and weighs 10st 12lb.

Those statistics may be influencing Bowring, who is perhaps mindful of the example of Robert Jones, a great scrum-half in the classical style who found it increasingly difficult to overcome the handicap of his physical slightness amid the modern power game.

But Jones was less a victim of his own deficiencies than of the inadequacies of his teammates. Had he been born in the

southern hemisphere, his gifts would have been sheltered by ferocious farm-bred giants. Playing behind the Welsh pack, he usually found those same giants jumping on his head.

This is, nevertheless, the best possible moment for Thomas to be blooded. He played well in the defeat of Italy two weeks ago, his 16 points giving him a momentum which it would be a shame to waste. And England, in the six months since they were beaten by the All Blacks, have shown few signs of coherence or conviction.

FOR all their public declarations, England's leading figures hardly give a great impression of unity. There seem to be fissures all over the place: between the manager and the captain, between the captain and some of the players — not necessarily huge rifts but the sort of hairline cracks caused by the cooling of relationships. The impression is created that strategy and technique are the answer to everything. There is no warmth, no passion.

England are also suffering from several specific problems, particularly among the forwards. Ben Clarke, who will be the one player of world class in their forwards on Saturday, is having to come to terms with the demands of pack leadership while trying to sustain his own level of individual enterprise.

Lawrence Dallaglio has made a promising start but Tim Rodber returns to the back row without having given any indication of a recovery from his flaccid form of the second half of last year. It may be that Mark Regan's contribution at the set-pieces will be more productive than it was in Paris; and it may not.

As for the new English half-backs, Northampton's young pair show such potential that it would be no surprise to see them still there for the first fixture of the next millennium. But they are inexperienced at this level and Thomas would face them at little disadvantage — a factor that might look very different a year hence.

In order to select Matt Dawson and Paul Grayson, Jack Rowell had to prepare himself to face critics sceptical of his decision to favour a couple of unknowns from the Second Division. That took courage and vision, which is what he is there for. Kevin Bowring is new to the job and might not yet ready to show boldness, but the trouble with caution is that it leaves you never knowing what might have been.

BBC hits back for World Cup deal

John Duncan

THE BBC is set to show highlights of next month's cricket World Cup after doubling its original offer to BSkyB, which has exclusive television rights to the tournament.

Last November the satellite channel rejected BBC's original bid, thought to be about £500,000, as unrealistic.

However, Will Wyatt, the managing director of BBC Network Television — upset at a series of recent rights disasters such as losing the FA Cup final and Formula One motor racing — yesterday renewed contact with Sky which is responding positively to the development. The BBC already has the rights for ball-by-ball coverage on radio.

The development is a humiliation for Jonathan

Martin, BBC TV's head of sport, who has presided over the recent embarrassments and over whose head Wyatt's offer to Sky is said to have been made.

The episode comes as part of the increasingly dirty war of words over television sports rights between terrestrial and satellite broadcasters as the Broadcasting Bill wings its way through parliament.

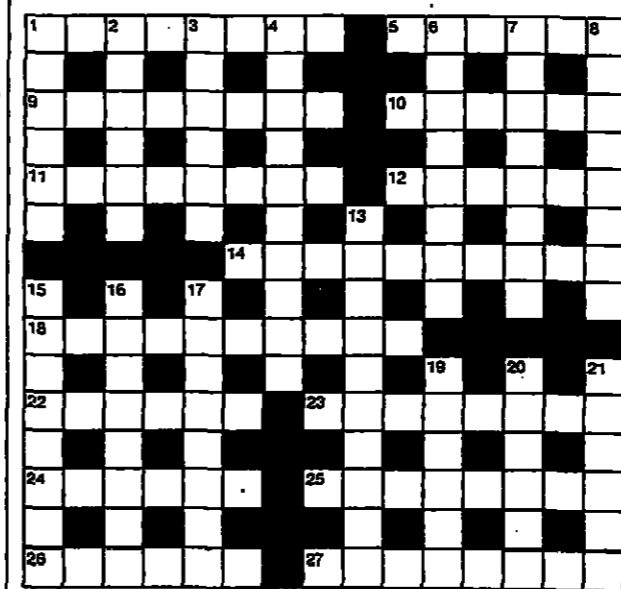
Lord Howell told the House of Lords in last week's debate that Sky had reneged on an agreement to provide the BBC with highlights of the month-long tournament in India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

However, Sky insiders say that in fact the BBC made one offer which was rejected and then broke off contact. The new bid will be discussed this week.

TV and BBC share coverage of Euro '96, page 14

Guardian Crossword No 20,562

Set by Paul



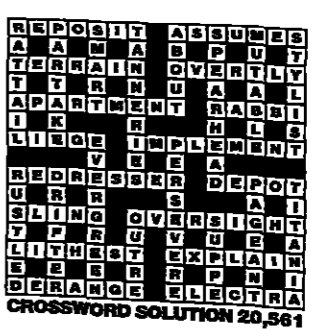
Across

- 1 Sailor embracing non-U buddy to the last shows sentimentality (6)
- 5 Part of the body — the foot? (6)
- 9 It's O.K. for car that's bursting? (4-4)
- 10, 12 Magic line to north-east side of London (6,6)
- 11 Rebellious Christian left out church with little hesitation (8)
- 12 See 10
- 14 Exact severity? (10)
- 18 Span — one crushed by the Spanish, (it's periphrastic in Seville) (6-4)
- 22 Car crashes a habit where there's lots of ice (6)
- 23 Mongrel duck is otter and another beast (8)
- 24 Girl is murder victim (6)
- 25 Russian fighter drops to earth initially causing headaches (6)

- 26 Woman who should have stayed pure has son delivered, nevertheless (4,2)
- 27 Meat and dessert give us brawn (8)

Down

- 1 One rarely washes the back of the neck (6)
- 2 It smells like marksman has been decapitated (6)
- 3 See 19
- 4 A welcome cardiograph? (6-4)
- 6 Sat too high a value upon the pace of cricket (8)
- 7 Man being injected with anaesthetic must be restrained (8)
- 8 Coin is English post-impressionist (6)
- 13 Often in dances I have short routine (4,2,4)
- 15 French and Cuban revolutionaries to different extents genuine (4,4)



CROSSWORD SOLUTION 20,561

- 16 American films always seem to have one corpse lying around the hospital (3,5)
- 17 University singles out what's unfair (8)
- 19-3 Of fair carats it could be? Of fair carats it is! (4,2,6)
- 20 Major highway requires reconstruction of main turning points (6)
- 21 Highly respect Paul, hero of the American Revolution (8)

Solution tomorrow

Published by Guardian Newspapers Limited at 115 Finsbury Road, London EC2R 2ER, and at 164 Despatch, Manchester M60 2PR. Printed at the Guardian Press Centre, 2 Millharbour, London E14 3AB. Tel: 020 7576 7000. Fax: 020 7576 7001. Email: news@guardian.co.uk. Website: www.guardian.co.uk. Copyright © 1996 Guardian Newspapers Limited. All rights reserved. Printed in Great Britain. The paper is made from 100% recycled paper.

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Whatever the evidence, is it right to prosecute again Maxwell and Trachtenberg whose lives for nearly four years have already been dominated by the legal proceedings against them?

Marcel Berlins Q2 page 7

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